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**COMMUNICATION AND POLITICAL SOCIALIZATION: THE CASE OF KIDS
VOTING WESTERN NEW YORK**

BY

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FEBRUARY 1, 2003

**A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO THE
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**THIS THESIS IS DEDICATED TO THE VOLUNTEERS AND STAFF
OF KIDS VOTING**

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ABSTRACT

This thesis has two major purposes. First, this thesis is an endeavor to tell the story of Kids Voting Western New York (KVWNY). KVWNY is affiliated with Kids Voting USA (KVUSA), a non-profit, non-partisan organization whose aim is to reduce voter apathy and promote political participation by working with youth. The story of KVWNY is told in four parts. First, the story of KVWNY starts with a problem statement regarding the social issue which the Kids Voting program tries to address - youth apathy. The second part of the story describes KVUSA and KVWNY based on information from the media, Kids Voting pamphlets and interviews with the Assistant Director of KVWNY.

KVWNY conducted program evaluation surveys in 1998, 1999 and 2000. Results from the three surveys are presented in the third part of the thesis where answers to the Kids Voting program evaluation questions are reported and analyzed. The last part of the Kids Voting story describes 1997 and 1998 KVWNY community survey results.

The second purpose of this thesis is to examine the underlying process of youth political socialization by investigating the relationships between variables related

to the making of discursive democracy. Kids Voting program impact is assessed in the context of youth discursive citizenship. As a result, the importance of civic education is addressed. The media, school, and family as political socialization agents are also introduced. The topic of discursive democracy, which is the theoretical background for a study on additional impacts of the Kids Voting program, is presented. Theoretical variables relevant to the making of discursive citizenship, such as information from the media, political talk and political participation, are also assessed in order to offer additional insight into the impact of the Kids Voting curriculum.

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CHAPTER 1: PROBLEM STATEMENT: YOUTH APATHY IN THE U.S.

Consequences of Youth Apathy on Voting and Media Use

Political apathy has been conceptualized in various ways, from a simple measure of lack of interest in election campaign (Berelson, Lazarsfeld & McPhee, 1954) to a complex measure of low political involvement (Verba and Nie, 1972). Political involvement is defined as general interest in politics, engagement in political discussion and media utilization for political information (Verba & Nie, 1987). Bennett (1986) used data from the National Election Studies and the University of Michigan's Survey Research Center from 1960 to 1984 and constructed a political apathy index, which consists of voting, campaign activism, media usage and political information. Based on Bennett's apathy index, political apathy is thus defined as the lack of general interest in politics and public affairs as well as the absence of political participation.

Youth apathy is the lack of interest in politics and low political participation among the 18 to 24-year-olds. Age as an indicator of political interest and involvement has long interested political science scholars. Analysts have found that age as a social factor does predict the

extent to which eligible voters participate in political activities. Bennett (1986) contends that there is a curvilinear relation between age and apathy. Bennett (1986) finds that in every instance between 1960 and 1984, despite the advantage of education attainment, the youngest age grouping is the most apathetic. But interest rises steadily thereafter and reaches the peak when a person is in his or her 50s or even 60s, generally followed by subsiding interest after age 75.

Data from U.S. Bureau of the Census show that the curvilinear relationship between age and political involvement persists from 1964 to 1998. Figure 1.1 shows the voting patterns of 18 to 24-year-olds in presidential elections¹, and Figure 1.2 shows the pattern in midterm elections. Overall, the percentage of those who reported having voted has decreased, which is illustrated by an overall downward pattern from the 1960s to the 1990s.

Figure 1.3 illustrates the curvilinear relationship between age and voting². According to Figure 1.3, among all of the different age cohorts, the youth cohort has the

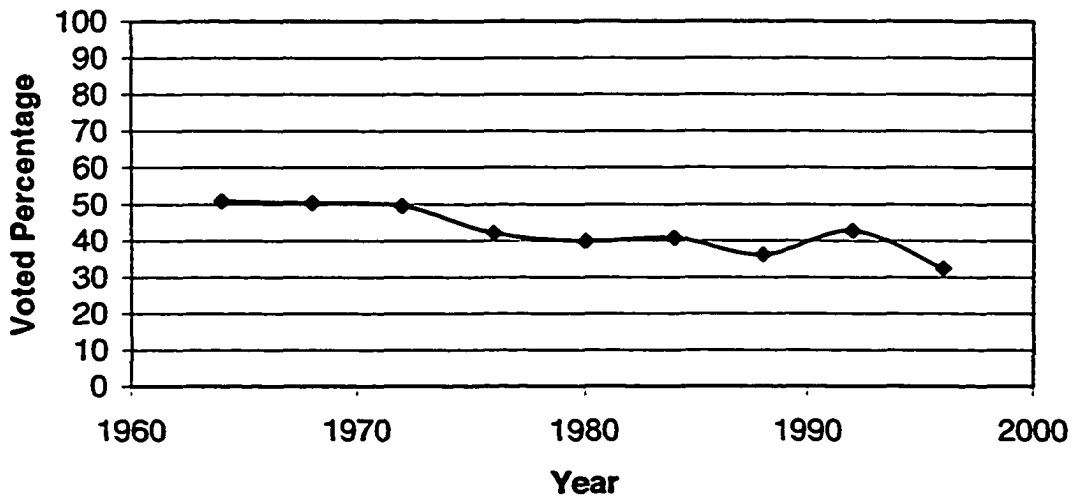
¹ 18-, 19-, and 20-year-olds were enfranchised in 1971.

² Figure 1.3 contains average voter turnout in each decade. Both presidential and midterm elections are included. For the 1960s, the average is based on turnout rate in 1964, 1966 and 1968. For the 1970s, the average is based on turnout rate in 1970, 1972, 1974, 1976 and 1978. The 1980s average turnout rate is calculated by averaging voted percentage in 1980, 1982, 1984, 1986 and 1988. The average turnout rate in the 1990s is based on turnout rates in the 1990, 1992, 1994, 1996 and 1998 elections.

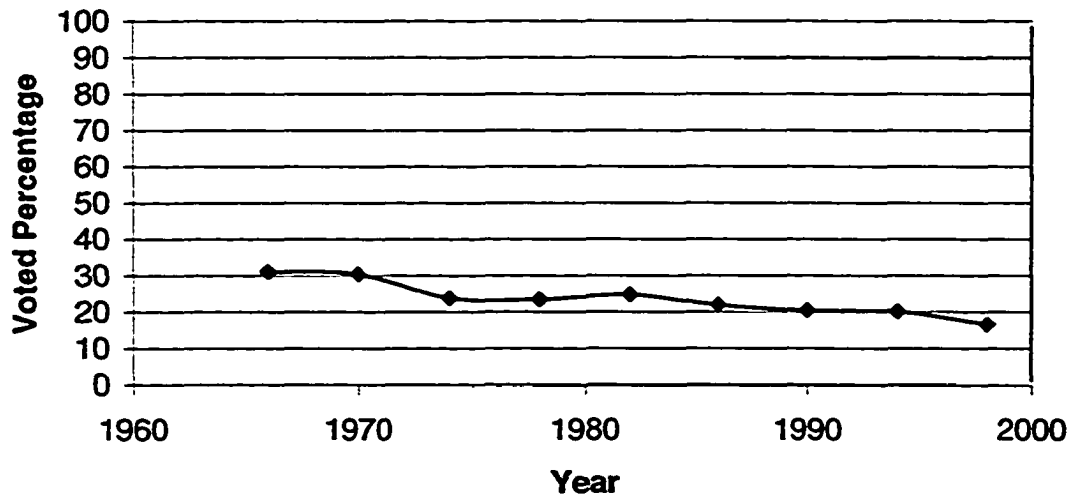
lowest vote percentage across four decades. Voter turnout decreased from the 1960s, to the 1970s, to the 1980s, and reached its lowest in the 1990s. In fact, the youth cohort is not the only age group suffering from a decrease in voting; the turnout rate among the 25 to 44-year-olds decreased in the 1970s and the 1980s, and again in the 1990s. For the 45 to 64-year-olds, there was a slight increase in the 1980s, but a decrease in the 1990s. Among the 65-year-olds and over, there was also an increase in turnout from the 1970s to the 1980s, but this age group also experienced a decrease in the 1990s.

In addition to the low turnout rate, there was also a decline in other kinds of political involvement of American youth. Easterlin and Crimmins (1991) note that from the early 1970s through 1986-87, there has been a decline in political activities such as writing to public officials, working in a political campaign or participating in demonstrations or boycotts.

**Figure 1.1: 18-24 Years Old Voted in Presidential Elections
1964-1996**

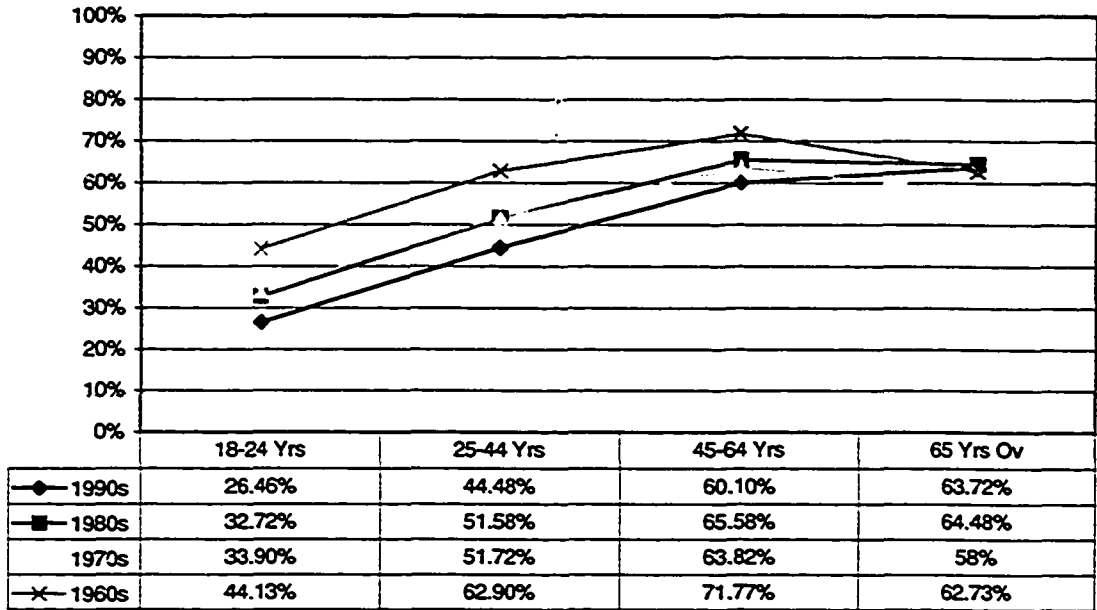


**Figure 1.2: 18-24 Years Voted in Midterm Elections
1964-1998**



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, July 19, 2000.

Figure 1.3 Voting Patterns across Four Decades 1964-1998



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, July 19, 2000.

Beside the decline in voting and political participation, young people's attention to the news also declined. In fact, young Americans' interest in the news has reached a new low. In a report titled The Age of Indifference: A Study of Young Americans and How They View the News (1990) by the Pew Research Center for the People and the Press (formerly the Times Mirror Center), researchers provide a comparative examination of what young people know, what they pay attention to and what media they use, and conclude that Americans under 30 years of age represent a generation that knows less than younger people

once did and are less likely to read newspapers. It is also a generation that is less likely to vote and is less critical of its leaders and institutions than young people in the past (The Pew Research Center, 1990). Moreover, a 1996 Media Studies Center/Roper Survey on voters and the media finds that only 15 percent of 18- to 30-year-olds followed campaign coverage closely (Chideya, 1997). In fact, the percentage of people under 35 who said they read a newspaper yesterday declined from 67% in 1965 to 30% in 1990 (The Pew Research Center, 1990). Television news viewership among young people also declined from 52% in 1965 to 22% in 1996 (Buckingham, 1997).

Young people are not only less interested in news, but are also less informed. An August 1995 telephone survey conducted by The Pew Research Center for the People and the Press on a nationwide sample of 1751 people shows that for four well-reported Congressional issues, only 8% of respondents under 30 years of age knew three out of the four issues, compared to 23% among 30-49 year olds, 24% among 50-64 year olds, and 30% among those 65 years and older.

Causes of Youth Apathy

Scholars have examined factors that would account for indifference to public affairs among 18 to 24 years old. Causes of youth apathy can be categorized into social/political factors, effects of changing values, and period effects.

Social/Political Factors

Social/political variables relevant to youth apathy consist of age, partisanship, education, and social status. Many young adults are apathetic due to their preoccupation with establishing a career and selection of a spouse (Bennett, 1986; Jennings & Niemi, 1981). Moreover, Milbrath and Goel (1977) suggest that younger adults are less likely than older adults to be strongly identified with a political party, to be long-term residents of a community, or to have acquired property. Each of the above factors contributes to greater concern with political life (Milbrath and Goel, 1977; Bennett, 1986).

Another factor that is relevant to youth apathy is level of formal education. For the period from 1960 to 1984, among Americans under age 45, education was the most

important social factor determining interest in public affairs (Bennett, 1986). When most young Americans are indifferent to politics, it is only among the college educated young that one finds interest in public affairs (Bennett, 1986).

Younger peoples' absence at the polling station can also be contributed to one type of social barrier to voting - inconvenience. Younger voters are "often too busy to be bothered, or feel they have little or no stake in the outcome of an election" (Schneider, 1996, p. 355). Younger voters are preoccupied with other activities, such as school, work, parties, and tests, so that it becomes inconvenient to tune in for political information and make time to go to the polls.

This attitude changes when one's political decisions affect life areas, such as marriage, mortgage, children, taxes, schools, and the environment (Schneider, 1996, p. 356). This also explains the rising of turnout rates at the more mature years of one's life.

Reasons for most of the young people to tune out from the news are the same as why they do not vote -- "No time" and "Too busy" (The Pew Research Center, 1996). An April 1996 Media Consumption Survey conducted by The Pew Research Center for the People and the Press finds that 64 percent

of the young people under 30 years of age indicated that "No time/Too busy" was the reason why they watch network nightly news less often, and 55 percent of them indicated the same reason for watching local television news less often.

Effects of Changing Values

Research also indicates that the causes of youth apathy are due to changes in values held by the younger generation. Materialism as a life goal and pursuing education to achieve wealth have become more prominent among the young (Loeb, 1994; Easterlin & Crimmins, 1991). As Inglehart (1981) points out, people with materialistic values are more supportive of business and the status quo, are less politically involved and show less concern for specific social issues such as the environment. In fact, from the early 70s through 1987, private materialism as a life goal increased greatly in importance among American youth. Goals relating to family life increased somewhat, public interest concerns diminished modestly, and the goal of personal self-fulfillment declined sharply. In addition, there is also a retreat from political involvement and a conservative shift in political beliefs

(Easterlin & Crimmins, 1991). Loeb (1994) further contends that college students nowadays have come of age under the sway of political, cultural and economic currents that convince them to seek personal well-being over a common social good. As a result, the large majority of college students are politically withdrawn, and a minority of them takes public stands.

Young people, however, are not the ones that initiate the changes in values. Research shows that the shift in values of the young does correspond to a similar change in the values generally held by adults and, thus, the changes of values are transferred to the young.

Youth apathy and materialism are also the result of the economic environment in the U.S. Loeb (1994) observes that America's economic crunch makes it hard for students to take responsibility for more than just personal survival. Compared to twenty years ago, college students nowadays work more hours at outside jobs and graduate deeper in debt. In 1969, 43 percent of all college students worked outside jobs while enrolled in school. By 1979, the percentage had increased to 51 percent, and by 1990, it was 63 percent.

Period Effect

Although long known to be less politically involved, the young are also most susceptible to the effects of political trends (Beck & Jennings, 1979). For example, the generation entering the electorate during the late 1960s and early 1970s was unusually politically active. Beck and Jennings (1979) notes that the political events and turmoil of the period drew young people into political activism at rates much higher than usual. On the other hand, in a more politically quiescent period such as in the late 1970s and early 1980s, young people would not only be much more apathetic than their elders, but also less politically involved. Studies show that from the early 1970s to the early 1980s, the youngest of the electorate (18 - 20) manifested the largest increases in apathy (Bennett, 1986). If the 21- 24 year-olds were also considered, the above argument would still hold from 1960 to 1984. In fact, the period of peak interest in politics was between 1968 and 1972, which was precisely the period of greatest agitation and turmoil in American history. Consistent with Bennett (1986), Gilmour and Lamb (1975) also find that the youngest

group was the least alienated in 1968 among all age cohorts.

Generational Effect

In regard to youth apathy, Putnam (2000) attributes the decline in voting to generational change. He notes that baby boomers and their children have been less likely to vote than previous generations. According to Putnam, there are two types of social change. The first type is called intracohort change, which is mainly an individual process. Individuals across different age cohorts change their tastes and habits in a single direction simultaneously. This type of social change occurs quickly and could be reversed quickly. The second type is intercohort change, which is primarily a generational process. Social changes are brought about by different generations' different tastes and habits. The social physiology of birth and death eventually transforms the society. This type of social change occurs slowly, is more subtle and harder to reverse. For Putnam, the low turnout rate results from an intercohort change, a generational change. Younger generations simply are not as concerned as older generations about politics.

Miller and Shanks (1996) also conceptualize the decline of voter turnout from a generational perspective. The life cycle effects on turnout are measured by the differences in turnout rates among three age cohorts, the pre-New Deal cohort who entered the electorate prior to the 1920s until 1928, the New Deal cohort who entered the electorate from 1932 to 1964, and the post-New Deal cohort who started voting from 1968. It is found that the turnout rates from pre-New Deal generation is higher than that for the New Deal generation and post-New Deal turnout is lower than that of the New Deal generation. The human mortality and population turnover inevitably lower voter turnout.

The State of Political Socialization Research

Conover and Searing (2000) note that the major contribution political scientists can make to educational reform is through the study of political socialization. Political socialization is a developmental process by which children and adolescents acquire cognitions, attitudes and behaviors relating to their political environment (Langton, 1969; Hess and Torney, 1967; Hyman, 1959). However, in recent years, the field of political socialization has been "in a state of disarray," and the amount of research

devoted to it has declined abruptly (Conover & Searing, 2000, p. 91). Over the past two decades, the field as a whole provides "disappointing theoretical and empirical bases" to assume the task of educational reforms that might strengthen the role of schools in the making of citizens (Conover & Searing, 2000, p. 91). Moreover, although considerable research has been devoted to explain political behavior among adults, for the most part scholars have ignored the empirical question of how students develop a sense of citizenship, tolerance and a deliberate character that are essential to a democratic society (Conover & Searing, 2000).

Organization of the Dissertation

The purpose of this dissertation is to take up the political socialization research to explain how students develop a sense of citizenship by examining the roles schools, family, and the media play in the process of political socialization, with special emphasis on the impact of the Kids Voting curriculum on political learning among youth. This dissertation has two parts. Part I details the Kids Voting program in the U.S. and Western New York, including its origin, scope, program and curriculum.

Part I also contains research results from annual Kids Voting evaluation surveys conducted in Western New York. Part I consists of Chapter 2, Chapter 3 and Chapter 4.

Part II comprises Chapter 5 through Chapter 7. These chapters report an attempt to closely examine the underlying process of youth political socialization through variables related to making of discursive citizenship among youth. Chapter 5 contains conceptualization, goals and characteristics of civic education and how school, family and the media are agents of civic education. Chapter 6 includes theories and practices of discursive democracy, and Chapter 7 specifies how the Kids Voting curriculum contributes to the making of discursive citizenship.

CHAPTER 2: AN INTERVENTION: KIDS VOTING

The purpose of the Kids Voting program is to engage the young in the electoral process. At the national level, Kids Voting USA's origin, scope and growth, program, curriculum, and limitations will be presented. Locally, the origin, scope and growth of Kids Voting Western New York will be introduced. Annual program evaluation research conducted by Kids Voting Western New York, and the Departments of Communication and Political Science at the University at Buffalo will be introduced. Research design, methods, and results will be presented in Chapter 3.

Kids Voting USA

Origin

The establishment of Kids Voting USA started with a fishing trip to Costa Rica in 1987 by three Arizonans: Max Jennings, a newspaper editor, R. R. Evans, CEO of Evans Management, and Charles A. Wahlheim, president of Joe Woods Development. In a conversation with their cab driver, they learned that voter turnout in Costa Rica is about 80 percent. Furthermore, they also learned that voting is a family event in Costa Rica. Children go to the polls with their parents on election day and vote alongside with their

parents. Voting is also promoted aggressively in public schools. Costa Ricans learned the importance of voting early in their lives, which contributes to the high voter turnout in the country.

Jennings, Evans, and Wahlheim, the three founders of the Kids Voting program in the U.S., marveled at the high turnout rate, the highest voter turnout of any country in the western hemisphere, and the long-held tradition that children go to the polls with their parents and cast mock ballots in special booths. At the end of their trip, they determined to find some way to improve voter participation in their own community. In 1988, one year after their trip, Kids Voting was launched as a pilot program in six metropolitan Phoenix communities in the East Valley area and involved 30,000 students from kindergarten through high school in 40 schools with the aim to eradicate citizen apathy and improve voter participation (Kids Voting Western New York Executive Summary).

Scope and Growth

The Arizona pilot program was so successful that by 1990 the program became statewide. 675,000 students and 18,000 teachers participated, which made up 95 percent of

Arizona's school population. By 1991, Kids Voting was incorporated as a national nonprofit, nonpartisan, grassroots organization: Kids Voting USA (Hall & Jones, 1998). In 1992, the Kids Voting USA Network branched into 11 states and involved 1.5 million students, with nearly 500,000 going to the polls to vote with their parents or guardians in Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Florida, Georgia, Kansas, North Carolina, Ohio, South Dakota and Tennessee (Kids Voting Western New York Executive Summary).

By 1994, affiliates with Kids Voting USA doubled to include 20 states plus the District of Columbia at a budget cost of \$5 million, reaching 2.3 million students, 100,000 teachers, 3,000 schools, 8,000 voter precincts, and 50,000 volunteers. And by 1996, the number doubled again with 38 states plus the District of Columbia participating. In fact, over 61,000 students came to the polls and voted on the 1996 election nationwide. Presently, the Kids Voting USA Network reaches 5 million students, 200,000 teachers, 6,000 schools, 16,000 voter precincts, and 80,000 volunteers (Kids Voting Western New York Executive Summary).

The Program

Kids Voting USA is a nonprofit, nonpartisan, grassroots-driven organization "dedicated to securing democracy for the future by involving youth in the election process today," as stated in the mission statement of the organization. Kids Voting works to educate and involve youth in the election process through school curriculum, family participation, and community involvement to enhance civic education and to help improve voter turnout, especially among eligible voters between 18 and 24. By addressing citizen apathy and improving voter participation, Kids Voting is designed to develop a tradition, or habit, of responsible citizenship in future generations of voters.

Kids Voting USA is also the only program of its kind that enables students to visit official polling sites on election day, accompanied by a parent or guardian, and cast a ballot on the same candidates as the official ballot in local, state, and national elections, including president, vice president, U.S. representatives, and other state and local offices. In this interactive civic educational program, students from kindergarten through high school

report to local polling precincts, check in and fill out paper ballots in private voting booths just like adults do. Students who participate in the Kids Voting program also vote on specific Kids Voting referenda. For example, the issues on the 2000 election were: 1) Should students be in school year-round? 2) Should local government be allowed to establish a curfew for those under 18? 3) Should schools be allowed to test students for drugs? The issues on the 1999 election were: 1) Should the voting age be lowered in New York State? 2) Should boards of education be expanded to include student representatives? 3) Should young people's access to violence in the media be controlled? After the ballots are marked, the students' votes are then tallied and reported in the media.

This real-life activity gives students a hands-on learning experience about the importance of voting and the responsibilities of an informed voter. The design of the whole program, from curriculum implementation to family and community involvement, is to rekindle in the young a passion for and appreciation of the democratic process. The purpose of the program is simple: to educate today's youth into tomorrow's voters. In fact, "kids who have been active in the political process as part of their elementary, middle and high schools' basic activities will

be better prepared to assume their full civic responsibility as an adult" (Eagles & Jacobson, 1999).

Kids Voting Western New York

Origin, Growth and Scope

As an affiliate of Kids Voting USA, Kids Voting Western New York (KVWNY) was founded in 1996 by the Buffalo News. 14 school districts in Erie County and 1 school district in Niagara County elected to participate in that pilot year. In comparison with other states, KVWNY had the largest pilot program. By 1997, Kids Voting Western New York was expanded to include every school in Erie and Niagara counties that wanted to participate and became the first affiliate to participate in local elections. And by 1998, Kids Voting Western New York grew to involve more than 158,000 students from 266 schools in Western New York. On the 1998 election day, nearly 55,000 young people voted at 580 polling places in Erie and Niagara counties. By 1999, Kids Voting Western New York reached 286 participating schools and 48,032 students came to the polls to vote on the 1999 election day. In the 2000 election,

78,325 students from 348 participating schools went to their polling place and cast their vote. In 2001, there were 323 participating schools and 35,432 students voted in the Kids Voting elections (Kids Voting Western New York 1996-2001 Participation Summary).

Organizational Structure

KVWNY started as independent administration supported by Buffalo News space. Now housed in and supported administratively by Erie 1 Board of Cooperative Educational Services (BOCES), KVWNY is overseen by an advisory board, which consists of 15 to 20 members. The voluntary advisory board generally meets once a month and has representatives from educators, the media, and community leaders. Decisions concerning KVWNY's day-to-day operation are made by the advisory board.

Financially, KVWNY is a non-profit, self-sustaining entity. Fundraising is achieved through the recruitment of sponsors at 3 levels. The first level is Champions of Democracy, which are KVWNY's major sponsors. Currently, there are about 15 Champions of Democracy. At the second level, there are associate sponsors. At the third level,

there are Friends of Kids Voting. Sponsorship can be achieved in 2 types: cash sponsors or in kind services.

KVWNY has a staff that consists of 2 full time positions and 3 part time positions. The 2 full time positions include a Director and an Assistant Director/Operations. The 3 part time positions comprise 1 volunteer coordinator, 1 Buffalo School Coordinator, and 1 Niagara County Administrator. All the above positions are paid positions.

Programs

KVWNY provides a year round program for participating schools. In addition to providing schools with a civic education curriculum as I have discussed above, throughout the year, KVWNY holds 4 major activities, which all lead up to the November election. A bi-partisan bash, KVWNY's primary fundraising event, is held every spring. Approximately 400 to 600 people participate at the event every year. There are balanced representatives from both political parties. During the last week of September, KVWNY encourages participating schools to celebrate National Kids Voting Week, which is followed by the Kidsvention in the last week of October. Kidsvention will

be discussed in detail in the following section. Lastly, on election day, students go to polling places and vote.

Programs and activities sponsored by KVWNY are publicized through a number of media outlets, such as the Buffalo News, television, and radio. As of 2001, the Buffalo News has provided the majority of KVWNY's advertisements. Half page or full page advertisements were provided by the Buffalo News to describe KVWNY's activities or to thank teachers and sponsors for their support.

There are 2 factors that determine how many schools participate in the Kids Voting curriculum. The first factor is the nature of the election. Generally, federal elections attract more schools to participate than state elections, and state elections attract more schools than local elections. The second factor is staffing. Some schools do not have the staff available to coordinate the Kids Voting curriculum and activities and thus are not able to participate.

The recruitment of schools starts in January. Schools are required to fill out a Commitment Agreement Form to participate. KVWNY provides teacher training sessions for participating schools. One training session will be provided in the Fall, and another session will be held in the Spring. The training sessions generally last for 2

days. Some of the training sessions are held in cooperation with Erie Boces. Typically, KVWNY provides teacher training to school coordinators, and then the school coordinators provide the same training to the faculty at their school.

KVWNY currently is fully integrated into both Erie and Niagara Counties. Although there is an outline for an expansion into the other 6 counties of Western New York, this plan has not been started yet.

Kidsvention

Kidsvention is the third major activity held by KVWNY. In the last week of October, Kidsvention is held for students to debate on the issues that will appear on the ballots in November. In 2001, 48 to 50 schools participated in Kidsvention. The 7th and 8th graders were the biggest group. Topics for debate are selected by KVWNY, teachers, and from ballots from other Kids Voting local chapters.

The debate format of Kidsvention is original in Western New York. The first Kidsvention started in San Jose, California, under the format of the Democratic and Republican National Conventions, which are a day of

speeches, debates, and appearances by elected officials. KVWNY adapted the San Jose format and turned Kidsvention into a debate in Western New York.

The goals of Kidsvention in Western New York are to reinforce the skills of critical thinking and to facilitate political tolerance. In terms of critical thinking, the issues that are debated later become the questions on the Kids Voting ballot. By debating the issues, students are exposed to both sides of a proposition and thus are encouraged to learn from both sides of an issue. Kidsvention thus also facilitates tolerance.

The Role of Community Volunteers

On election day, there are about 5000 volunteers working at KVWNY's voting booths across Erie and Niagara Counties.

Volunteers for KVWNY are overseen and managed by 3 paid, part time staff: Volunteer Coordinator, Buffalo Area Administrator, and Niagara County Administrator. Volunteers for KVWNY can be categorized into individual volunteers and organization volunteers.

There are two ways individual volunteers are recruited. First, individual volunteers are recruited

through Kids Voting advertisements. Second, individual volunteers are also recruited at the school district level. No matter how individual volunteers are recruited, all individual volunteers are managed at the school district level.

Each of the coordinators has an individual volunteer leader for each school district. The volunteer leader for each school district is the most important person in the KVWNY's voluntary system. The volunteer leaders are the ones that make the 5000 volunteer effort possible. The volunteer leaders are responsible for volunteer recruitment at their school district and the management of individual volunteers recruited by the KVWNY office. For the City of Buffalo, for example, there are 9 volunteer leaders. On average, each volunteer leader is responsible for about 15 polling places, and each polling place needs 2 to 3 people for each 3-hour shift. Volunteer leaders recruit polling place captains to be in charge of polling places.

There are approximately 45 to 55 volunteer leaders throughout Erie and Niagara Counties. They are crucial for the success of the Kids Voting program. Volunteer leaders are recruited through schools. That person can be an active parent, a leader in the Parent Teacher Association, or come from local political circles. Volunteer leaders

are often referred to KVWNY by school coordinators, but teachers rarely serve as volunteer leaders.

Organizations also volunteer on election day by adopting polling places. For example, in the past, Verizon and Target have adopted polling places.

Research

Starting in 1997, Kids Voting Western New York affiliated itself with the Department of Communication and the Department of Political Science at the University at Buffalo for periodical assessment of the program. One telephone survey was conducted in November, 1997, to measure the awareness, impression, and impact of Kids Voting on Western New York communities. Another telephone survey with similar goals was conducted in November, 1998.

Starting in 1998, the Department of Communication and the Department of Political Science at University at Buffalo also conducted yearly program assessment at Kids Voting participating schools in Western New York. So far, three school surveys have been conducted each year: students survey, teachers survey, and coordinators survey. In 1998, 25 schools, 1796 students, 36 teachers, and 16 school coordinators in Erie County were surveyed. In 1999,

12 schools, 683 students, 17 teachers, and 6 coordinators in both Erie and Niagara counties were surveyed. In 2000, the Department of Communication and KVWNY surveyed 7 schools, 362 students, 10 teachers, and 3 coordinators in Erie County. Summary results and discussions of the above surveys will be presented in Chapter 3. Because teacher and coordinator surveys yield the same results every year, namely there is not enough time to further implement the Kids Voting curriculum, as a result, only student survey results will be closely examined in chapter 3.

Limitations

Although Kids Voting USA has affiliates in 38 states, there still are some limitations associated with the program. The major limitation is that the coverage within each state is quite concentrated (Eagles and Jacobson, 1999). For example, Kids Voting Western New York covers two counties but not other counties in the region. The expansion and growth of the program into each school and community will require financial support and support from local leadership and school administrators.

The Curriculum

The Kids Voting USA Curriculum is a comprehensive, grade-specific (kindergarten through grade 12) curriculum offered to participating schools and communities by Kids Voting USA. The Kids Voting curriculum is designed to stress the importance of voting and to discover the empowerment the vote gives. Students are encouraged to gather information (mostly from the media) and make critical decisions. Students are also urged to initiate discussions with their families and friends about candidates and issues. The curriculum does not endorse any particular candidate. Instead, it provides students with a methodology to learn more about the electoral process.

Curriculum materials are issued in three parts: K-6, 7th and 8th grade, and high school classes. Part I for kindergarten through grade 6 comprises 7 volumes of lessons and classroom activities. Part II consists of 1 volume for both 7th and 8th graders. Part III also has 1 volume for all high school students. Lessons are complete with teacher plans, handouts, and resource appendices. All of the Kids Voting lessons correlate to the National Curriculum Standards for Social Studies and Standards 1 and 5 of the New York State Social Studies Standards. National and New

York State social studies standards will be outlined below and followed by a description of the curriculum and a discussion of the correlation between the curriculum and the standards.

National Curriculum Standards for Social Studies

NCSSS was drafted and proposed by the National Council for the Social Studies (NCSS), which was founded in 1921 with the mission to engage and support educators in strengthening and advocating social studies. The NCSSS comprises 10 themes that organize social studies curricula at every grade level. Kids Voting USA incorporated five out of the ten themes into the curriculum.

The fourth theme of the NCSSS is *individual development and identity*. Personal identity is formed by culture, groups, and various institutions. Social studies curricula should provide a study of identity formation by exploring how individuals develop from youth to adulthood to enhance the understanding of the relationships between social norms and personal identities. Students of early grades will observe siblings and older adults to project oneself into the future. The exploration, identification, and analysis of how individuals relate to others are

central in this process. In the middle grades, students begin to explain self in relation to others in the society and culture. At the high school level, students will draw core concepts of human development to apply to individuals, societies, and cultures.

The fifth theme is *individuals, groups, and institutions*. Schools, churches, families, government agencies, and the courts are institutions that exert enormous influence over an individual. Social studies curricula should provide the study of how institutions are formed, what control and influence them, how they control and influence individuals and culture, and how institutions can be maintained or changed. Young learners will examine how institutions affect their lives and influence their thinking. Students will be assisted in recognizing that tensions occur when two or more institutions are in conflict. Middle school students will examine the ways in which institutions change over time and the ways to work through institutional change for the common good. High school students will understand the paradigms and traditions of social and political institutions.

The sixth theme is *power, authority, and governance*. Social studies lessons should provide for the study of how people create and change structures of power, authority,

and governance. Students understand the historical development of structures of power, authority, and governance in the U.S. and in other parts of the world. Students become more effective problem-solvers and decision-makers through the study of the relationships among the individual rights and responsibilities, the needs of social groups and concepts of a just society. For early grades learners, they explore and develop their sense of fairness and order, as well as comprehend rights and responsibilities in specific contexts. In the middle school, rights and responsibilities are applied in more complex contexts. High school students will utilize abstract principles to allocate power and authority in the governing process.

The ninth theme is *global connections and interdependence*. The realities of global connections require understanding of the interdependence among nation states. Analyzing tensions, patterns and relationships among world cultures help students examine policy alternatives that have national and global implications. Young children recognize that they would be affected by events on a global scale. At the middle school, students analyze the interactions of nation states and how they respond differently to global events and changes. High

school students think carefully about personal, national and global decisions, interactions and consequences. Issues such as peace, human rights, trade, and global ecology are explored.

The tenth theme is *civic ideals and practices*. Social studies curricula should provide for the study of civic ideals, principles and practices of citizenship in a democratic society. Lessons address ways for civic participation, the evolution of the meaning of citizenship, the balance between rights and responsibilities, the role of the citizen in the community, the nation, and the world. At the elementary level, students learn civic ideals, practices and how to balance the needs of individuals and the group. Middle school students develop their ability to analyze and evaluate the relationships between ideals and practice. They are also able to see themselves participate in their community for civic duties. High school students are able to recognize the rights and responsibilities of citizens, set directions for public policies and participate in community service and political activities.

New York State Social Studies Standards

The New York State Social Studies Standards consist of five major areas of studies for an intellectual outlook of the evolution of American culture and world civilization. The first standard focuses on history of the United States and New York. Students are expected to demonstrate their understanding of key ideas, eras, themes, developments, and turning points in the history of the United States and New York. The second social studies standard examines world history. Students are expected to use a variety of intellectual skills to demonstrate their understanding of major ideas, eras, themes, developments, and turning points in world history, and examine world history from a variety of perspectives. The third standard focuses on geography. Students demonstrate their understanding of the geography of the interdependent world we live, including the distribution of people, places, and environments at the local, national, and global level. The fourth standard is on economics. Students demonstrate their understanding of how the United States and other societies develop economic systems and associated institutions to allocate scarce

resources, how major decisions were made in the U.S. and other national economies, and how market and nonmarket mechanisms solve the scarcity problem in an economy. Standard five focuses on civics, citizenship, and government. Students demonstrate their understanding of the necessity for establishing governments, the governmental system of the U.S. and other nations, the U.S. Constitution, the basic civic values of American constitutional democracy, the roles, rights and responsibilities of citizenship, and avenues of citizen participation.

Kids Voting curriculum from K through 12 correlates to State standard one and five. As a result, both of them are presented in detail as follows.

Standard One: History of the United States and New York

There are four key ideas for the study of New York State and United States history. The first key idea requires an examination of the development of American culture, its diversity and multicultural aspects, and the ways people are united by different values, practices, and traditions. Performance indicators for the first key idea

at the elementary level include an understanding of the roots of American culture, especially its development from many different traditions, and the basic ideas of American democracy as explained in the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution, and other important documents.

Performance indicators at the intermediate level consist of identifying and interpreting the key ideas, values and beliefs as manifested in American culture and in important historical documents such as the Declaration of Independence, the New York State Constitution, the United States Constitution, and the Bill of Rights. Performance indicators at the commencement level comprise the changes and evolution of American culture and American democratic values and beliefs as expressed in the above-mentioned important historical documents.

The second key idea for the study of history of the United States and New York allow students to explore important ideas, social and cultural values, beliefs, and traditions from New York and United States history to illustrate the connections and interactions of people and events across time. Performance indicators for the second key idea at the elementary level include gathering and organizing information about the traditions transmitted by various groups in their neighborhood and community as well

as recognizing how traditions and practices were passed from one generation to another. Performance indicators at the intermediate level consist of reasons for periodizing history in different ways and exploring the significance of key turning points in New York and United States history. Students are also expected to understand the relationship between United States domestic and foreign policies and analyze the role played by the United States in international politics. Performance indicators at the commencement level comprise a discussion of several schemes for periodizing the history, the criteria for judging the importance and significance of important events, eras or issues in history, how the Constitution, federal laws and the rights of citizenship provide a unifying factor in bringing together Americans from diverse roots and traditions, analyzing the ideas and traditions leading toward foreign policies, as well as a comparison of foreign policies implemented by the United States and other nations.

The third key idea focuses on the study about the major social, political, economic, cultural and religious developments in New York and United States history. Performance indicators at the elementary level consist of gathering and organizing information about the important

accomplishments of individuals and groups, including Native American Indians, in their neighborhoods and communities, classifying information by type of activity, such as social, political, economic, technological, scientific, cultural or religious, as well as identifying individuals who have helped to strengthen democracy in the United States and throughout the world. Performance indicators at the intermediate level include completing case studies about individuals and groups who represent different ethnic, national and religious groups in New York and the United States at different times or in different locations, organizing information about the important achievements and contributions of individuals and groups, as well as describing how ordinary people and famous historic figures have advanced the fundamental democratic values, beliefs and traditions expressed in important historic documents. Performance indicators at the commencement level comprise a comparison and contrast of the experiences of different ethnic, national, and religious groups in the United States and to explain their contributions to American society and culture. Students are also expected to research and analyze major themes and developments in history, such as colonization and settlement, revolution, immigration, expansion and reform era, civil war and reconstruction,

labor movement, great depression, world wars and contemporary issues. Students prepare essays and oral reports about the important social, political, economic, scientific, technological and cultural developments, issues and events from history. Students are expected to understand the interrelationships between world events and domestic developments, such as causes for immigration, economic opportunities, human rights abuses, and tyranny versus freedom.

The fourth key idea is to sharpen students' skills of historical analysis, which include the ability to explain the significance of historical evidence, weigh the importance, reliability and validity of evidence, understand the concept of multiple causation, and understand the importance of changing and competing interpretations of different historical developments. Performance indicators at the elementary level include analyzing different interpretations of key events or issues in history and exploring different experiences, beliefs, motives, and traditions of people living in their communities. Students also view historic events through the eyes of those who were there, as shown in their art, writings, music and artifacts. Performance indicators at the intermediate level include considering the sources of

historic documents and evaluating their reliability, understanding how different experiences, beliefs, values, traditions and motives cause individuals and groups to interpret historic events and issues from different perspectives, as well as comparing and contrasting different interpretations of important events and issues in history and explaining reasons for the different accounts. Performance indicators at the commencement level are to analyze historical narratives about key events in history to identify the facts and evaluate the authors' perspectives. Students are expected to consider different historians' analyses of the same event or development in history to understand how different frames of references influence historical interpretations, to evaluate the validity and credibility of historical interpretations of important events and issues, as well as to revise the interpretations as new information is learned.

Standard Five: Civics, Citizenship and Government

Standard five comprises four key ideas. The first key idea focuses on the study of civics, citizenship and government that involves learning about political systems, the purpose of government and civic life, and the different

assumptions held by people across time and place regarding power, authority, governance, and law. Performance indicators at the elementary level show that students know the meaning of key terms and concepts related to government, including democracy, power, citizenship, nation-state, and justice. Students also consider the nature and evolution of constitutional democracies, explore the rights of citizens in other parts of the hemisphere and determine how they are similar to or different from the rights of American citizens, and examine the sources of a nation's values as embodied in its constitution, statutes, and important court cases. At the intermediate level, performance indicators show that students understand the probable consequences of the absence of government and rules, examine the basic purposes of government and the importance of civic life, understand that social and political systems are based upon people's beliefs, describe how and why the world is divided into nations and what kinds of governments other nations have, and analyze how the values of a nation affect the protection of human rights and accommodations of basic human needs. Performance indicators at the commencement level illustrate that students examine how the values of a nation and international organizations affect the guarantee of human

rights and recognitions of human needs. Students explore the nature and evolution of constitutional democracies throughout the world, compare the U.S. political systems with others in terms of ideology, structure, function, institutions, decision-making processes, citizenship roles, and political culture. Students also identify and analyze advantages and disadvantages of various governmental systems.

The second key idea looks at how the state and federal governments established by the Constitutions of the United States and the State of New York embody basic civic values, principles and practices, and establish a system of shared and limited government. Examples of civic values and principles are justice, honesty, self-discipline, due process, equality, majority rule with respect for minority rights, and respect for self, others, and property. Performance indicators at the elementary level show that students understand how the Constitutions of New York State and the United States and the Bill of Rights are the basis for democratic values in the United States, understand the basic civil values as the foundation of American constitutional democracy, and explain what the United States Constitution is and why it is important. Students also understand that the United States Constitution and the

Constitution of the State of New York are written plans for organizing the functions of government, understand the structure of New York State and local governments including executive, legislative and judicial branches, and identify their legislative and executive representatives at the local, state and national level. Performance indicators at the intermediate level indicate that students understand how civic values reflected in United States and New York State Constitutions have been implemented through laws and practices, how the New York State Constitutions and other documents served as a model for the development of the United States Constitution, define federalism, and explain the powers granted to the national and state governments by the United States Constitution. Students also compare and contrast the development and evolution of the constitutions of the United States and New York State, learn to value the principles, ideals, and core values of the American democratic system based upon the premises of human dignity, liberty, justice and equality, and understand how the United States and New York State Constitutions support majority rule but also protect the rights of the minority. At the commencement level, performance indicators show that students trace the evolution of American values, beliefs and institutions, examine the disparities between civic

values expressed in the United States Constitution and the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights, explore a variety of political, social and economic lives in the United States and throughout the world, and learn to identify, respect and model the core civic values inherent in the founding documents. Students also compare and contrast the Constitutions of the United States and New York State, and understand the dynamic relationship between federalism and state's rights.

The third key idea focuses on the roles of the citizen within American constitutional democracy and the scope of a citizen's rights and responsibilities. At the elementary level, performance indicators show that students understand that citizenship includes an awareness of the holidays, celebrations and symbols of the nation, examine what it means to be a good citizen in the classroom, school, home and community, and identify and recognize the rules and responsibilities students have at home, in the classroom, and at school. Students examine the basic principles of the Declaration of Independence and the Constitutions of the United States and New York State, and understand that effective, informed citizenship is a duty of each citizen, demonstrated by jury service, voting, and community service. Students also identify basic rights that they

have and those that they will acquire as they age. Performance indicators at the intermediate level include explaining what citizenship means in a democracy, how citizenship is defined in the Constitution, and how the definition of citizenship has changed in the United States and New York State over time. At the commencement level, students understand that citizenship means an exercise of certain personal responsibilities, including voting, considering the rights and interests of others, behaving in a civil manner, and accepting responsibility for the consequences of one's actions. Students examine issues at the local, state and national levels and advise responses that promote the public interest and general welfare, such as planning and carrying out a voter registration campaign. Students examine how citizenship is defined by the Constitution and important laws and explore how citizens influence public policy in a representative democracy.

The fourth key idea notes that the study of civics and citizenship requires the ability to probe ideas and assumptions, ask and answer analytical questions, take a skeptical attitude toward questionable arguments, evaluate evidence, formulate rational conclusions, and develop participatory skills. At the elementary level, performance indicators show that students show a willingness to

consider other points of view before drawing conclusions or making judgments. Students sharpen their problem solving abilities by participating in activities that focus on a classroom, school or community issues and problems, suggesting alternative solutions or courses of action to hypothetical or historic problems, evaluating the consequences of alternative solutions or courses of action, prioritizing the solutions based on established criteria, and proposing an action plan to address the issue of how to solve the problem. At the intermediate level, students respect the rights of others in discussions and classroom debates regardless of whether or not one agrees with their points of view, explain how civility promotes effective citizenship and preserves democracy, and participate in negotiation and compromise to solve classroom, school, and community disagreements and problems. At the commencement level, performance indicators show that students participate as informed citizens in the political justice system, including voting. Students also evaluate, take and defend positions regarding what the fundamental values and principles of American political life are and their importance to the maintenance of democracy. Students evaluate, take and defend what attitudes would facilitate thoughtful and effective participation in public affairs.

Students also consider the need to respect the rights of others and others' points of view.

The content of the curriculum is organized on conceptual frameworks. At the elementary level, Civic Alive! introduces the concept of democracy, the principle of one-person, one-vote, leadership, the right to vote, and the responsibility to register by involving students in role-playing, craft activities and classroom elections. For example, in "the Voting Chain," kindergarten students vote with paper links to see how each link makes up part of the decision and why each person can vote just once.

At the middle school level, students get lessons in information gathering and how to deconstruct a political news story or a piece of campaign propaganda with questions like: Is this information essential to the decision? Is this information credible? Does this information fit with other known facts? Is the source reliable? Is this information enough to make a decision? The 7th and 8th graders are also taught to think critically about political information presented to them. They are encouraged to consider questions like: Does this information represent the entire issue? Was this information developed to trigger emotions? Does it make me angry, scared, happy,

confused? Do I have input from everyone who may be affected by this issue.

Table 2.1: National and New York State Social Studies Standards

National Curriculum Standards for Social Studies	
# 4	Individual development and identity
# 5	Individuals, groups, and institutions
# 6	Power, authority and governance
# 9	Global connections and interdependence
# 10	Civic ideals and practices
New York State Social Studies Standards	
# 1	History of United States and New York
# 5	Civics, citizenship and government

Table 2.2: The Correspondence between of Kids Voting Curriculum with National Curriculum Standards for Social Studies and New York State Social Studies Standards

Kids Voting Curriculum Concepts	Correspondence with New York State Standards	Correspondence with National Standards
Kindergarten through Grade 6		
We cooperate	#1, #5	#4, #5, #6, #9
My vote gives me power	#1, #5	#4, #5, #6, #10
I elected leaders	#1, #5	#4, #5, #6, #9, #10
I have the right to vote	#1, #5	#4, #5, #6, #9, #10
I have the responsibility to vote	#1, #5	#4, #5, #6, #9, #10
I register to vote	#1, #5	#4, #5, #10
I study the candidates and issues	#1, #5	#4, #5, #6, #10
I vote at my polling place	#1, #5	#4, #5, #6, #9, #10
I watch the returns	#1, #5	#4, #6, #10
I stay involved	#1, #5	#4, #10
Grade 7 and Grade 8		
I have the right to vote	#1, #5	#4, #6, #9, #10
I have a responsibility to vote	#1, #5	#4, #5, #6, #10
I work for a cause	#1, #5	#4, #5, #6, #9, #10
I gather information	#1, #5	#4, #5, #6, #10
I weigh the information	#1, #5	#4, #6, #10
I make a decision and act upon it	#1, #5	#4, #6, #10
I watch the election and continue my involvement	#1, #5	#4, #5, #6, #10
High School		
The importance of government and voting	#1, #5	#4, #5, #6, #10
The reluctant extension of the franchise	#1, #5	#4, #5, #6, #10
Majority rule in this republic	#1, #5	#4, #6, #10
Public issues and the political process	#1, #5	#4, #5, #6, #10
Students and political activism	#1, #5	#5, #6, #9, #10

At the high school level, lessons and activities are designed to stress the importance of government and voting, the history of franchise reform, principle of majority rule and students and political activism through activities such as researching and planning legislation, debating and

creating a community voters' guide. High school lessons are indexed to the national civics standards and contain performance assessment suggestions.

National and State standards that Kids Voting curriculum corresponds to are outlined with the description of curriculum content for each grade level. Information on the correspondence between curriculum and social studies standards is based on the Teacher's Manual accompanying the Kids Voting curriculum.

Kids Voting Curriculum Content and National and State

Standards: K - 6

Kids Voting's curriculum for younger children (K - 6) centers around ten concepts, which correspond to the national and New York state standards. The ten concepts are "We cooperate," "My vote gives me power," "I elect my leaders," "I have the right to vote," "I have the responsibility to vote," "I register to vote," "I study the candidates and issues," "I vote at my polling place," "I watch the returns," and "I stay involved." The above ten concepts correspond to five out of the ten themes of the NCSSS as well as standard one and standard five of the New York state standards. As previously mentioned, the five themes of the NCSSS that Kids Voting incorporated into its

lesson plans include the first, fifth, sixth, ninth and the tenth theme.

Theme 4 - individual development and identity;

Theme 5 - individuals, groups and institutions;

Theme 6 - power, authority and governance;

Theme 9 - global connections; and

Theme 10 - civic ideals and practices.

Based on the ten concepts, there are lessons and activities designed specifically for each grade from kindergarten to the 6th grade. Example lesson plans will be presented based on each concept and the correspondence to national or state standards will be outlined.

Concept 1: "We cooperate"

For kindergarten children, concept 1 corresponds to national standard 4, 6 and 9 as well as state standard 1. To illustrate the importance of each person's vote, a Status of Liberty puzzle was given to every six children. In order to demonstrate that voting is like a puzzle and that every person needs to vote or something will be missing, questions such as whether every piece is needed to complete the puzzle or what will happen to the puzzle if one or two pieces are missing are asked. Kindergarten

children are to realize that if some people do not vote in an election, something will be missing and the puzzle will never be completed.

For the 1st grade children, the lesson for concept 1 corresponds to national standard 4, 6 and 9 as well as state standard 1. In this lesson, "cooperative musical chairs," the concept of cooperation is stressed. Children are to be divided into groups, and each group will have one less chair than the number of students in each group. As the music starts to play, children will march around the chairs. When the music stops, everyone must find a place to sit, even if it is on someone's lap. More chairs will be removed until there is only one chair left to see whether students can seat everyone with just one chair. 1st graders are prompted to think about what have happened when everyone in the group cooperated and what have happened when even one person did not cooperate.

The concept of cooperation is further demonstrated to the 6th graders. Students are to practice how to reach consensus through cooperation. Concept 1 lesson corresponds to national standard 4, 5, 6 and 9. It also corresponds to state standard 5. In this lesson, 6th grade students will be divided into groups of three and are asked to decide which five out of the ten advisors are to settle on a new

planet just discovered. The ten advisors, which consist of an elementary school teacher, a farmer, a cook, a botanist, a carpenter, a medical doctor, an engineer, a musician, a minister and a professional basketball player, will be listed on the chalkboard. Students then are asked how they reached their consensuses, how is consensus different from voting and under what circumstances is coming to consensus a good way to solve problems.

Concept 2: My vote gives me power

Lessons on concept 2 teach students to vote, tally and implement the vote so the power of their vote can be demonstrated. For kindergarten children, concept 2 is illustrated by a lesson entitled "voting chain," which corresponds to national standard 5, 6 and 10. It also corresponds to state standard 1. The kindergarten class will first pick an issue that can be immediately implemented. Each student will be given one strip of paper, and the concept of one person one vote will be explained. The issue will be stated as a question to be answered "yes" or "no." Children will link their vote under the Yes or No sign. Children will be prompted to count the vote and to think about what would happen if one

did not vote or voted more than once. In this lesson, kindergarten children will learn about one person one vote, will learn to count the vote and will recognize that the chain will look different if one person does not vote or votes more than once.

For the 3rd graders, students will also learn to vote and tally the vote. The lesson for the 3rd grade corresponds to national standard 4, 5 6 and 10 as well as state standard 1 and 5. The class will brainstorm ten to fifteen questions with the last one to be immediately implementable. In this "Yes or No Game," students will stand on one side of the room if they voted yes to a question and will stand on the other side of the room if they voted no. Questions such as whether everyone voted yes or no to every issue, whether their friend voted the same as they did, whether they thought about changing their vote to be like their friends' and whether they would vote the same if it had been a secret ballot are asked. Students also are encouraged to think about the power their vote gives them. In this lesson, students learn about the nature of voting and the power their vote gives them.

Another lesson that teaches students that their vote gives them power is through "The Odd Vote" activity designed for the 4th graders. Students are asked to vote

using several "odd" ways such as if they strongly agree with a statement, they would wave both their hands in the air or if they disagree, they put their thumb down. The last statement will be implemented. Students are asked whether they like voting this way, whether their friends voted the same way, whether a vote should be private sometimes, and how their last vote gave them power. This lesson corresponds to national standard 5, 6 and 10. It corresponds with state standard 1.

Concept 3: I elected leaders

Concept 3 teaches students the qualifications of political candidates. For 2nd graders, students will identify leaders as people who help them and will be encouraged to think about ways they can help the leaders. Students are asked to elect class leaders for duties such as line leaders and pledge leaders. A ballot to reinforce the concept of one person one vote and an "I Voted" button to demonstrate the pride of being a person who voted are distributed to every student. In this activity, students are asked to think about how the class leaders help them, how they can help the class leaders, how the national/local leaders help them, and how they can help the national/local

leaders. This lesson plan corresponds to national standard 5, 6, and 10. It also corresponds to state standard 1.

For the 5th graders, some qualifications for political office will be examined. Students will be divided into groups of three. Each group will receive one press bio for public office and three press bio forms. Each student in the group will complete his/her press bio form and detail the qualifications of being a candidate for public office. Students are prompted to think about how they could prepare themselves to be a candidate in the future, what desired characteristics of a candidate for public office are, and what experiences a candidate for public office should have. This lesson prepares students for national standard 10 and state standard 1.

Grade 6 students will develop criteria to rate political candidates. In this lesson, students are divided into groups of three and work on a candidate criteria sheet to write down desired characteristics of candidates. Students will work on criteria of the candidate for the President of the United States and for class president in areas such as education and experience, characteristics, and stands on the issues. This lesson plan corresponds to national standard 4 and 6 as well as state standard 5.

Concept 4: I have the right to vote

To illustrate that everyone has the right to vote, students will lose their right of free action or free choice in activities for concept 4. Students then will be asked how they feel when they lose their freedom. For example, 2nd graders will be paired up. One student will be the pipe cleaner, and another will be the bender. The bender has the right to shape the pipe cleaner by moving the pipe cleaner's arms or legs or head into any position. The pipe cleaner will have to do what the bender tells him/her to do. Students are asked that how they feel if they have to be a pipe cleaner all day, how they feel that they have to do what someone else makes them do, and what it means to be free. This lesson corresponds to national standard 4, 5, 6, 9 and 10. It also corresponds to state standard 1.

For the 3rd graders, students will experience voter discrimination and voter rights in the lesson "Nonvoter Simulation." Students will be randomly divided into two groups. One group will have voting rights but not the other. An election will be conducted, and the decision from the election will be carried out. Students are asked how they feel when they cannot vote, how they feel when

they can vote and whether students think it is fair that only one group can vote. This lesson corresponds to national standard 5, 6, and 10. It also corresponds to state standard 1 and 5.

The concept of the right to vote will be demonstrated to the 5th graders through "Suffrage Sequence Cards." Students will place voter suffrage in time sequence. Students then are asked why people want the right to vote, whether new cards can be added to the game, who still can not vote, and why it took so long for some groups to gain the right to vote. This lesson corresponds to national standard 4, 5, 6 and 10. It corresponds to state standard 1 and 5.

Concept 5: I have the responsibility to vote

Concept 5 will be illustrated to students by having them responsible for their own and others' actions. For kindergarten children, a "Car-Car" activity is designed to have children paired off, and one student will be the car, and another will be the driver. Children who are the cars will shut their eyes, and children who are the drivers will stand behind the cars. The drivers will steer their cars by pulling gently with their hands on the cars' shoulders.

After the game, children are asked to think about what it means to be responsible, what are the drivers' responsibilities, what are the cars' responsibilities, and why people should be responsible to vote. This lesson plan corresponds to national standard 4, 6, and 10. It also corresponds to state standard 1 and 5.

For the 4th graders, voter responsibility will be taught through causes and effects of voter apathy. Students are asked to vote everyday for a week. The teacher will not encourage or remind students to vote during the week. The results from the election will be implemented in the following week. Students are asked to think about whether the outcome would be different if everybody had voted, the ways to encourage every student to vote, and the ways to encourage adults to vote. This lesson corresponds to national standard 5, 6 and 10 as well as state standard 1 and 5.

A "Poll on Apathy" is designed for the 6th graders to think about the causes and effects of apathy. In this poll, students will answer a questionnaire with questions such as "Have you ever voted?," "Are you registered to vote now?," "Did you vote in the last election?," "Do you plan to vote in the next election?," and "If the answer to any question is no, what are your reasons?." The results will

be tallied and solutions to prevent voter apathy for both students and adults will be discussed. This lesson corresponds to national standard 10 and state standard 1.

Concept 6: I register to vote

Concept 6 centers on voter registration. The classroom activity for the 1st grade students is to register for the Kids Voting election. Students will also be prompted to think about why we need to register and what might happen if people were allowed to vote without registering. This lesson corresponds to national standard 5 and 10 as well as state standard 5.

This concept is demonstrated to the 2nd grade children through the "Catch Me" activity. 2nd graders will be given a "Catch Me Registration Sheet" with eight empty cells where they can draw. The teacher will hold up seven different shape cards for students to register. After the registration, the teacher will show the shape cards again in a different order. Some of the shape cards will be repeated, some will not be used, and the eighth one will be shown. Students are instructed to check off the 7 shape cards only once and not allow the eighth card to be used. Students then are prompted to think about whether they can

catch the teacher easily if they did not register the shapes earlier. Students will discuss the similarities and differences of shape registration and voter registration. This lesson corresponds to national standard 10.

For the 5th graders, a "Sim-Registration" will be held. Students will fill out an actual voter registration card or the registration card provided in the curriculum. Students are prompted to think about reasons why voters need to register, what might happen if people did not have to register, why some people are reluctant to register, and how we can get more people to register. This lesson corresponds to national standard 10 and state standard 1 and 5.

Concept 7: I study the candidates and issues

Kindergarten children will study and mark sample Kids Voting Ballot to learn about candidates and issues. Students will be encouraged to reflect on how they decide who to vote for, where they can go to gather information if they do not know the candidates or issues, and where they will go to mark their real ballot. This lesson corresponds to national standard 6 and 10.

The 1st graders will learn to gather information before they make their decisions. The teacher will conceal a small prize in one hand and have each student guess which hand has the prize. Students are allowed to ask for more information before they choose the hand. Students are encouraged to evaluate whether information helped them make the good choice, how can information help them to choose a good leader, and where they can find the information. This lesson corresponds to national standard 10 and state standard 5.

3rd graders will actually gather information and report on a bulletin board entitled "Where Did You Hear That?" There will be a mouth, a newspaper, a radio and a television on the bulletin board. Students are encouraged to write down information they gathered regarding candidates and issues at the corresponding spot. For example, if they heard the information from their parents, they will write down the information underneath the mouth. Students then are encouraged to consider how the information they gathered help them decide who and how to vote. Students will also be prompted to evaluate the correctness of the information they have gathered. This lesson corresponds to national standard 4 and 10.

Concept 8: I vote at my polling place

Early graders will serve as voting advocates to implement concept 8. For example, 1st graders will make "Pencil Flags" with the word "vote" on the flag. Students will use the pencils for a few days before the election and are encouraged to take the pencil home and remind adults to vote. 1st graders will also find out when the election day is, who they can remind to vote using their pencil flags, and who will take them to the polling place. This lesson corresponds to national standard 5 and 10 as well as state standard 5.

For 5th graders, in the "Party Planks" activity, students will learn to evaluate party platforms and join a fictitious party. Students will further reflect on how they decided which party to join, how this activity resembles joining a political party, and what a person can do if they do not want to join any political party but still want to vote. This lesson corresponds to national standard 4, 5, 6 9 and 10. It also corresponds to state standard 1 and 5.

For 6th graders, concept 8 will be implemented by having students find their polling places. Students will also analyze what sorts of buildings have polling places,

why polling places are located in such buildings, who chooses the polling places, and who runs the polling places. This lesson corresponds to national standard 5.

Concept 9: I watch the returns

Students will monitor and discuss the returns. For example, the day after elections, 2nd graders will discuss who will be the new leaders, whether their predictions were correct, what we can do to support the new leaders, and whether they have any sad or happy feelings about the results. This lesson corresponds to national standard 6 and 10 as well as state standard 5.

For 4th graders, students will also monitor and discuss the returns. But their discussion is more in depth than the lower graders'. For example, the 4th graders will describe what happened at the polling place, whether they have any problems in voting, whether the election turned out as they thought it would, how they feel about the results, and how to make a show on election returns more exciting. This lesson corresponds to national standard 10 and state standard 5.

Concept 10: I stay involved

Concept 10 is to encourage students to stay involved with the political process. From kindergarten children through 6th graders, students will make a "Wish Tree" with wishes students would most like to see come true for the country. Students are also encouraged to think about how their wishes for the country can come true, whether there is anything a young person can do to help the wishes come true, whether they had helped by participating in the Kids Voting program, and whether there is anything they can do in the classroom to help. This "Wish Tree" lesson corresponds to national standard 10.

Kids Voting Curriculum Content and National and State

Standards: 7 and 8

Curriculum for 7th and 8th graders has seven concepts, which center on basic civic duties, information gathering and evaluation, decision making, as well as how students can stay politically involved. There are two to five classroom activities under each concept.

Concept 1: I have the right to vote

There are three activities designed for this concept. In Activity C entitled "It All Adds Up: Women's Rights Arithmetic," students will work on five math problems using data from women's history and the women's suffrage movement. For example, one of the math problems is:

"The first formal demand for women's suffrage was issued at the Seneca Falls Convention for Women's Rights in July of 1848. Women did not win the vote until August of 1920. How many years did it take for this dream to be realized?" (p. 9)

Students will learn history on women's suffrage and practice their math skills. This lesson corresponds to national standard 10, state standards 1 and 5.

Concept 2: I have a responsibility to vote

There are four activities for concept 2. Activity A instructs students to do a "Nonvoter Survey" to find out why people did not vote and then brainstorm ideas and actions to change these views. For example, students will come up with solutions to reasons such as "This was not an important election," "I was too busy," or "I only have one vote; it doesn't really count." In Activity C, students learn to define and use voting process terms such as

"general election," "open primary," "polling place," "non-partisan primary," "political action committees," "closed primary," "caucus," "precinct" and "closed primary." This activity corresponds to all national and state standards.

Concept 3: I work for a cause

This concept also has four activities. In Activity A, students will work on their "On-The-Floor Improvisations" and portray newscasters at the Republican and Democratic conventions. Students will be divided into improvisation teams, and each team will receive an assignment slip. Examples of the assignments include "An anchor and a reporter on the floor cover the final two minutes of roll call balloting, focusing on the delegate speech that sends the winning candidate over the top," "Cover three planks of the party platform," or "Use opinion polling and expert interviews to evaluate the impact of the issues addressed." This lesson corresponds to national standards 4, 5, 10 and state standards 1 and 5.

In Activity B, students will write and deliver nomination speeches for presidential candidates using a four paragraph persuasive speech format provided by the curriculum. Students will discuss the purposes of

nomination speeches and their role in political party conventions, research their candidates, write their speeches, and deliver speeches in front of the class. Students will also be encouraged to examine how nomination speeches have changed over time. This activity corresponds to national standards 4, 5, 6, 10 as well as state standards 1 and 5.

Concept 4: I gather information

Concept 4 has 2 activities. In Activity A, "Solutions," students will gather information from the news and list what they consider as society's, community's, state's or nation's greatest problems. Students then will list solutions proposed by candidate A and candidate B. Students will also outline their own solutions. Students then will evaluate all the solutions and decide which candidate they will vote for. This lesson corresponds to national standards 6, 9, and 10 as well as state standards 1 and 5.

Concept 5: I weigh the information

Concept 5 also has two activities. In Activity A, students will create a videotaped commercial for a candidate or for an issue on the ballot. A storyboard page and an audio page will be provided to each group. In Activity B, students will create commentary poetry by using newspaper headlines. Students will select and record headlines and use the headlines to compose a poem. By putting the headlines together, students are asked to think about how newspapers can affect elections. Activity A corresponds to national standards 4 and 10 as well as state standards 1 and 5. Activity B corresponds to national standard 6.

Concept 6: I make a decision and act upon it

There are three activities to illustrate concept 6. In Activity A, students will make a voting decision based on a careful study of the candidates. Students will evaluate candidates' stands on issues, experience, and characteristics. First, students will outline major issues in the current election, the issues they are concerned about the most, and the overlapping of the two. Second,

students then will find out different candidates' stands on the issues listed. Third, students will research and record each candidate's experiences and qualifications. Fourth, students will rate the candidates in terms of their characteristics, such as "brave," "caring," "cooperative," "curious," "friendly," "hard-working," "honest," "smart," and "healthy." Students then are asked to make a wise decision based on the information they collected. This activity corresponds to national standards 6, 10 as well as state standards 1 and 5.

In Activity B, students will gather information on a candidate or an issue and make their decisions based on a decision-making chart. In this chart, students will think about whether the information is essential to the decision, whether the information is credible, whether the information fits with other known facts, whether the source is reliable, and whether the information is enough to make a decision. Students learn to critically assess the credibility of the information in this activity.

Concept 7: I watch the election and continue my involvement

There are five activities for this concept. Activity A is to monitor the election returns. Students will receive a map and will choose a color for each candidate. Students then will color the states according to the returns. In Activity C, students will arrange "An Inaugural Ball." To prepare for the party, students will be divided into several subcommittees such as invitation, budget, refreshment, music, gown, security, decoration and preservation. In Activity D, students will learn that citizens need to be involved in the ongoing political process to secure a democracy. A "Promises to Keep" chart will be distributed to students. Students will list promises made by a candidate, predict whether he/she will keep the promises, and record whether he/she keeps the promises. Activity A corresponds to national standards 6, 10 and state standards 1 and 5. Activity C corresponds to national standards 4, 9, 10 and state standard 5. Activity D corresponds to national standards 4, 5, 10 and state standards 1 and 5.

Kids Voting Curriculum Content and National and State

Standards: High School

Concept 1: The importance of government and voting

There are two lessons for concept 1. In Lesson 1, students will keep diaries of their daily activities to analyze the impact of government in their life. Students will be paired to analyze the diaries and reveal the influence of government in a single day. One student will read an activity, and the other student will identify the connection of government to that activity. For example, turning on water will mean plumbing codes, Federal Clean Water Act or municipal sewage treatment. Students then will be prompted to think about the importance of participation in government and the consequences of the choice not to vote. This lesson corresponds to national standards 4, 5, 6, and state standards 1 and 5.

In Lesson 2, students will be divided into groups and select by consensus the five rights most important to them from the Bill of Rights guarantees. Students will have to give reasons for selecting a particular right. Students will then discuss which right had the highest value to the class, why other rights were not selected and what would

happen if voters did not participate in choosing their leaders. This lesson corresponds to national standards 4, 10 and state standards 1 and 5.

Concept 2: The reluctant extension of the franchise

Concept 2 has four lessons. They are from lessons 3 through 6. Together they illustrate to the students the slow process of the extension of the franchise. In Lesson 4, for example, students will take and score the 68-item Alabama Literacy Test to experience the frustration and injustice of these tests. Students will discuss how they feel when they are robbed of the right to vote because they did not score well enough on the test, the reasons African Americans were kept from the polls, and the requirements today for registration and voting. This lesson corresponds to national standards 5, 6, 10 and state standards 1 and 5.

In Lesson 6, students will study and paraphrase 3 Supreme Court voting rights decisions and discuss whether they would make the same decisions, as well as give reasons for ordinary citizens to understand the decisions of the Supreme Court. This lesson corresponds to national standards 4, 5, 6, 10 and state standards 1 and 5.

Concept 3: Majority rule in this republic

There are three lessons for concept 3. They are lessons 7 through 9. In Lesson 7, students will hold a plurality election and a valenced election to choose their favorite rock groups. There will be two ballots. On ballot one students will check off only their one favorite group. On ballot two, students will number the groups from 1 to 6, with 1 as their least favorite and 6 as their most favorite. Results from both ballots will be tallied and recorded. Students will discuss Condorcet criterion to analyze the possible different results from the two ballots. Problems with plurality vote and ways to ensure that minority voice counts will be discussed. Lesson 7 corresponds to national standard 10 and state standard 1.

In Lesson 8, students will read about Jim Crow Laws and discuss how the majority may misrule, whether the Supreme Court ever condones majority actions that it later decides are unconstitutional, and what can be done to ensure that violations of people's rights will not occur. Lesson 8 corresponds to national standards 4, 6, 10 and state standards 1 and 5.

Concept 4: Public issues and the political process

Concept 4 has seven lessons. They are lessons 10 through 16. In Lesson 10, students will draw an "X" through any news articles which portray government in an unfavorable fashion and red-line sentences that are complimentary or neutral to government. Stories that are critical of government will be pasted on one posterboard. On another posterboard, students will paste articles that are in no way critical of government, such as sports, human interest stories, recipes, etc. Students then are encouraged to think about whether they can make an electoral decision based simply on the stories that are in no way critical of government, what limits the press has in news reporting, and why the press can not provide all the information one person needs to make a sound political decision. This lesson corresponds to national standards 6 and 10 as well as state standards 1 and 5.

In Lesson 13, students will design campaign signs, buttons, and bumper stickers for John Adams (Federalist Party) and Thomas Jefferson (Democratic-Republican Party). Students will also discuss what campaign devices were used in 1800, the platforms of today's Republican party and Democratic party, and the issues involved in the election

campaign. Lesson 13 corresponds to national standards 4, 5, 6, 10 and state standards 1 and 5.

Concept 5: Student and political activism

Concept 5 covers lessons 17 through 22. In Lesson 19, students will build their voter "Information Quotients" by gathering, using and disseminating information about voter registration, voting procedures, and voter information resources. Questions to be investigated on the Information Quotient page include what the voter qualifications are in your state, places you can register if you are qualified, documentations you need to have to register, how the declaration of party affiliations affects your voting in the primary elections, what your voting precinct is, where you must go to vote, where you can find out when elections are scheduled, what will be on the ballot, and what are the procedures to be followed at the polling place. Lesson 19 corresponds to national standard 4.

In Lesson 22, students will be mobilized through the use of both positive and negative strategies. Students will first take a personal ideological survey. Half of the class will then read and respond to a message from Nelson Mandela, and another half will read and respond to a Wall

Street Journal article criticizing teenage voters. The Nelson Mandela message serves as a positive way to motivate students, and the Wall Street Journal article serves as a negative strategy to motivate students. Students will be encouraged to think about their ideological inclination and learn about leading American politicians on different ideological spectrums. Lesson 22 corresponds to national standards 6, 10 and state standards 1 and 5.

Online Curriculum

A new online curriculum, *Civics Alive! The Activities*, is a comprehensive series of K-12 classroom activities available from the Kids Voting USA's website: www.kidsvotingusa.org. The title of the new online curriculum truly captures the intention of teachers, curriculum consultants, and administrators who helped compile the curriculum: to make civics education alive, "something traditional civics education in the schools has not been successful in doing" (Eagles and Jacobson, 1999). The curriculum provides 4 to 12 hours of classroom exercises. Most of the teachers use the materials in the fall prior to an election.

Conclusion

This chapter outlined the Kids Voting organization both at the national level and locally in Western New York. The Kids Voting curriculum was examined in detail regarding its nature of being student proactive and involving students in classroom activities. Before the actual curriculum was presented, national social studies standards and New York state social studies standards were described.

Results from Kids Voting research in Western New York are presented in Chapters 3 and 4. Chapter 3 contains results from 1998, 1999 and 2000 student surveys, and Chapter 4 has results from 1997 and 1998 Kids Voting community surveys.

**CHAPTER 3: 1998, 1999 AND 2000 KIDS VOTING WESTERN NEW
YORK STUDENT SURVEY**

Objectives

In order to assess the impact of Kids Voting on students and teachers in participating schools in Western New York, an annual program assessment survey was conducted by the Departments of Communication and Political Science at the University at Buffalo in 1998 and 1999 in association with KVWNY. The survey was again carried out in 2000 by the Department of Communication in association with KVWNY. The annual program impact assessment survey comprises three parts: a student survey, a teacher survey and a coordinator survey. Each of the surveys has its objectives. As previously mentioned, results from the teacher and coordinator surveys will not be presented because of the uniform results from all three years. Both teachers and coordinators state that there is not enough time to further implement the curriculum.

For the student survey, there are three major objectives. First, the survey is to measure students' overall impression of the Kids Voting program. Students were asked whether they liked voting, whether they would like to vote next year, and whether they had fun with the

program. Second, the survey also measures how much students participated in the Kids Voting program. Students were asked whether they registered to vote, whether they voted, and how much they participated in the Kids Voting activities in their school. Third, the survey evaluates the impact of Kids Voting program on student attitude toward voting. Students were asked whether they think it is important to vote.

Three Samples - 1998, 1999, 2000

Samples of the annual program impact assessment survey were randomly drawn from Kids Voting participating schools in Erie and Niagara Counties in Western New York. The 1998 survey targeted at 3810 students from 127 classes at 29 schools in Erie County. The targeted student sample comprised 5th graders through 12th graders. The 1998 student survey received responses from 1796 students from 76 classes at 25 schools in Erie County. Including all schools and classrooms, the compliance rate for the 1998 student survey was 47%. The 1998 sample included schools located in urban, suburban, and rural areas. The 1998 sample also included 36 teachers and 16 school coordinators.

The 1999 school survey targeted 1450 students from 58 classes at 23 schools in both Erie and Niagara Counties. The targeted student sample comprised the 5th, 6th, 8th, 10th and 12th graders. The 1999 school survey received responses from 683 students from 12 schools in both Erie and Niagara Counties. Including the schools that refused to participate in the survey, the compliance rate for the 1999 student survey was 47%. The 1999 sample also included 17 teachers and 6 coordinators.

The 2000 student survey targeted at 1275 students from 51 classes at 15 schools in Erie and Niagara Counties. Responses from 362 students at 7 schools in both Erie and Niagara Counties were received. The compliance rate for the 2000 student survey was 28%. The 2000 sample also comprised 10 teachers and 3 coordinators. Some biases are introduced by the low compliance rate in the 2000 survey. For example, there are more older students in schools that have been with the program for five years. This biased sample causes a negative correlation between years with the program and students experience with or participation in the program.

Methods

Surveys were conducted each year from late November to early December. However, methods to implement the surveys varied each year. In 1998, questionnaires were dropped off by the University at Buffalo research teams at the 25 selected schools in late November and questionnaires were picked up by the University at Buffalo research teams in early December.

In 1999, two methods were implemented to administer the survey. Depending upon the grade levels of the students, questionnaires were either read out loud by the University at Buffalo research teams to students or completed by students when the University at Buffalo research teams were present in the classroom. For the 5th and 6th graders, both the cover sheet and the questionnaire were read out loud to students when there was a copy of the questionnaire in front of them to follow along. For the 8th, 10th, and 12th graders, the present research teams read the cover sheet and explained the procedures to the class, and the students proceeded from there to complete the questionnaire. The main rationale for this type of implementation is to increase the compliance rate and to improve the quality of student responses. The presence of

the research teams allows students and teachers to ask questions if the questionnaire is not clear to them.

In 2000, because the 1999 fielding protocol did not significantly improve the compliance rate, which remained at 47% as in 1998, questionnaires were dropped off in late November and picked up in early December at fifteen schools in both Erie and Niagara Counties by the University at Buffalo research teams. Seven schools out of the fifteen returned the questionnaires.

Measurement

The annual program assessment survey comprises six questions assessing students' impression and participation in the Kids Voting program. Questions in this section were consistent every year from 1998 to 2001. The six questions were coded as either "yes" or "no." In 1999, one more question was added to the questionnaire to assess how much students had participated in the Kids Voting activities. Participation in the Kids Voting activities was coded on a 4-point scale from "a lot" to "none."

Kids Voting Program Evaluation Results

Kids Voting program impact was assessed by students' overall experience with the program, student participation in the program, and student attitude toward voting.

Students' Overall Experience with the Kids Voting Program

Students' overall experience with the Kids Voting program is measured by whether they liked voting, whether they would like to vote next year, and whether they had fun with the program.

Table 3.1 Students' Overall Experience with the Kids Voting Program(%)

	1998	1999	2000
Liked Voting			
Yes	45.8	52.3	70.4
No	9.4	40.7	28.2
Missing	44.9	7.0	1.4
N	1796	683	362
Would Vote Next Year			
Yes	76.8	78.0	84.0
No	22.7	21.7	15.5
Missing	.2	.3	.6
N	1796	683	362
Had Fun			
Yes	52.3	44.2	59.4
No	43.2	51.2	39.5
Missing	4.6	4.5	1.1
N	1796	683	362

The above table indicates that students' overall experience with the Kids Voting program has become increasingly positive. The percentage of students specifying that they liked voting and that they would like to vote next year increases from 1999 to 2000. Students indicating that they had fun with the Kids Voting program also increase, except for the year of 1999. For both 1998 and 2000, more than 50 percent of the students indicating

that they had fun with Kids Voting. In 1999, the percentage drops to under 50 percent.

Students' overall experience with the Kids Voting program is further analyzed according to student's grade in school and years the schools have participated in the Kids Voting program. According to Table 3.2 through Table 3.4, chi-square analysis shows that grade is a significant factor in determining students' experience with the Kids Voting program. For the three Kids Voting experience variables, the younger the students, the more likely they will have a good experience with the program. In other words, the lower the grades, the more likely the students reported that they liked voting, they would like to vote next year, and they had fun with the program. Averages of the proportion of the three Kids Voting experience variables for elementary school students (grade 5 and 6), middle school students (grade 7 and 8) and high school students (grade 9 through 12) in 1998 and in 1999 overall demonstrate this pattern. In 2000, middle school students are less likely to like voting and less willing to vote next year than high school students. However, middle school students in 2000 have more fun with the program than high school students.

**Table 3.2 Proportion Comparison Based on Grade and Years
Participated in the Program - Liked Voting
(On a Scale of 0 to 1)**

Liked Voting			
	1998	1999	2000
Grade			
5 & 6	.89	.74	.76
7 & 8	.82	.55	.66
9 - 12	.79	.44	.68
χ^2	31.391	42.058	21.668
df	7	5	7
p	.000	.000	.003
n	969	635	357
Years Participated			
1		.35	
2		.48	
3		.53	
4		.70	.82
5			.69
χ^2		39.478	4.875
df		3	1
p		.000	.027
n		635	357

Table 3.3 Proportion Comparison Based on Grade and Years Participated in the Program - Would Vote Next Year (On a Scale of 0 to 1)

Would Vote Next Year

	1998	1999	2000
Grade			
5 & 6	.87	.88	.90
7 & 8	.77	.73	.80
9 - 12	.70	.72	.80
χ^2	57.141	27.812	28.081
df	7	5	7
p	.000	.000	.000
n	1742	681	360
Years Participated			
1		.72	
2		.75	
3		.75	
4		.85	.93
5			.82
χ^2		11.053	5.910
df		3	1
p		.011	.015
n		681	360

Table 3.4 Proportion Comparison Based on Grade and Years Participated in the Program - Had Fun (On a Scale of 0 to 1)

Had Fun			
	1998	1999	2000
Grade			
5 & 6	.73	.68	.69
7 & 8	.55	.51	.60
9 - 12	.40	.29	.46
χ^2	112.224	70.271	23.324
df	7	5	7
p	.000	.000	.001
n	1671	652	358
Years Participated			
1		.21	
2		.40	
3		.46	
4		.59	.30
5			.55
χ^2		43.148	16.423
df		3	1
p		.000	.000
n		652	358

Years of participation in the Kid Voting program is another variable used to analyze students' experience with the program. Information regarding how many years the 25 schools surveyed in 1998 participated in the program was not available. Data from the 1999 student survey (Table 3.2 through Table 3.4) show a monotonic relationship between years participated in the program and students' experience with the program. According to the 1999 data, the longer the schools participate in the program, the more

likely the students will like voting, will vote next year and will have fun with the program. This relationship, however, is not sustained in the 2000 data. The 2000 data in Table 3.2 through Table 3.4 demonstrate that the longer the schools adopt the program, the less likely the students will report a good experience with the program. It is found that among the 76 students who have been in the program for four years, a majority of the students (77.6%) were 5th to 7th graders. Among the 277 students who have been in the program for five years, 56.68% of them were 5th to 7th graders. Because grade is a significant factor in determining students' overall experience with the program, as a result, the large number (43.32%) of older students in schools that have been with Kids Voting for five years causes the evaluation from year five schools to be lower than evaluation from year four schools. This further shows that years students have been exposed to the program is still a significant predictor of students' experience with the program, although it is subject to the influence of other factors.

Whether parents voted in the election is also a significant predictor of students' experience with the program. Table 3.5 through Table 3.7 show that for the students whose mothers or fathers voted in the 1999

election, it is more likely for those students to report a good experience with the program. According to the 1999 data, if the students' parents voted in the election, students tend to report that they liked voting, they would like to vote next year, and they had fun with the program.

In the 2000 data, whether mother voted is related to whether students liked voting, would vote next year, and whether students voted. Whether mother voted, however, is not related to whether students had fun, registered, and participated in the Kids Voting activities at their school. Whether father voted is related to whether students registered and voted in the Kids Voting election, but it is not related to other Kids Voting variables.

The significant relationship between whether parents voted and students' experience with the Kids Voting program demonstrates that for a school intervention program to be successful, parents' involvement with students' experience is essential. It can also be stated that Kids Voting program motivates parents to vote in the election. In other words, there is a possible triggering up effect of the Kids Voting program, which very possibly provides adults in Western New York a second chance in political socialization. If this is the case, the impact of Kids Voting program in Western New York is not limited to only

the students, but also the adults who live with the students.

Table 3.5 Proportion Comparison of Liked Voting Based on Whether Parents Voted

	1999	2000
Liked Voting		
Mother Voted		
Yes	.63	.76
No	.43	.61
χ^2	15.872	4.843
df	1	1
p	.000	.028
n	539	322
Father Voted		
Yes	.63	.74
No	.42	.71
χ^2	17.829	.146
df	1	1
p	.000	.702
n	475	307

**Table 3.6 Proportion Comparison of Would Vote Next Year
Based on Whether Parents Voted**

Would Vote Next Year	1999	2000
Mother Voted	.82	.87
Yes	.73	.76
No		
χ^2	5.974	4.229
df	1	1
p	.015	.040
n	580	322
Father Voted		
Yes	.84	.87
No	.71	.85
χ^2	10.986	.130
df	1	1
p	.001	.718
n	511	310

Table 3.7 Proportion Comparison of Had Fun Based on Whether Parents Voted

	1999	2000
Had Fun		
Mother Voted		
Yes	.52	.61
No	.36	.58
χ^2	11.010	.205
df	1	1
p	.001	.651
n	555	322
Father Voted		
Yes	.52	.61
No	.39	.61
χ	6.855	.009
df	1	1
p	.009	.926
n	490	308

Student Participation in the Kids Voting Program

While students' overall experience is measured by whether they liked voting, would like to vote next year, and whether they had fun with the program, another set of Kids Voting evaluation questions pertains to student participation in the program. Student participation is measured by whether students registered to vote, whether they voted, and how much they participated in the Kids

Voting activities at their school. Overall, more students registered to vote and voted in the Kids Voting elections than not. The only exception is in 1999 when the number of students who did not vote exceeded the number of students who voted. In 2000, the number of students who registered and voted is about three times more than the students who did not register and did not vote. This increase demonstrates that students' participation in the Kids Voting elections is somewhat affected by whether a presidential election is held that year.

Starting from 1999, one more Kids Voting evaluation question was added to the survey. Students were asked how much they have participated in the Kids Voting activities at their school. Survey results in Table 3.8 show that both in 1999 and 2000, the number of students who did not participate in the Kids Voting activities exceeded the number of students who participated. Because of the presidential election in 2000, more students participated in 2000 than in 1999.

Table 3.8 Student Participation in the Kids Voting Program (%)

	1998	1999	2000
Registered to Vote			
Yes	62.3	53.4	74.3
No	37.3	46.0	25.7
Missing	.4	.6	--
N	1796	683	362
Voted			
Yes	55.1	45.2	71.5
No	44.7	54.5	28.2
Missing	.2	.3	.3
N	1796	683	362
Participated in Kids Voting Activities			
A lot		12.2	17.7
Some		25.3	29.8
Not Much		26.2	29.3
None		35.9	22.4
Missing		.4	.8
N		683	362

Proportion comparison of student participation in the program by grade indicates that the younger the students, the more likely they will register to vote, vote, and participate in the Kids Voting activities at their school. Years the school participated in the program also result in higher student participation in 1999. The reason why in the 2000 survey students who are in the program longer tend to be less likely to register, vote and participate has

been discussed in the previous section on students' overall experience with the program.

Table 3.9 Proportion Comparison Based on Grade and Years Participated in the Program - Registered to Vote (On a Scale of 0 to 1)

Registered to Vote			
	1998	1999	2000
Grade			
5 & 6	.75	.67	.89
7 & 8	.67	.56	.72
9 - 12	.45	.43	.56
χ^2	133.162	25.711	40.779
df	7	5	7
p	.000	.000	.000
n	1745	679	362
 Years Participated			
1		.48	
2		.48	
3		.49	
4		.62	.87
5			.71
χ^2		12.066	7.915
df		3	1
p		.007	.005
n		679	362

**Table 3.10 Proportion Comparison Based on Grade and Years Participated in the Program - Voted
(On a Scale of 0 to 1)**

Voted			
	1998	1999	2000
Grade			
5 & 6	.61	.67	.79
7 & 8	.56	.41	.64
9 - 12	.47	.33	.65
χ^2	51.428	59.259	21.550
df	7	5	7
p	.000	.000	.003
n	1748	681	361
Years Participated			
1		.13	
2		.46	
3		.46	
4		.57	.83
5			.69
χ^2		58.272	5.903
df		3	1
p		.000	.015
n		681	361

**Table 3.11 Proportion Comparison Based on Grade and Years
Participated in the Program - Participated in Kids Voting
Activities
(On a Scale of 0 to 1)**

Participated in Kids Voting Activities (0 - 3)

	1999	2000
Grade		
5 & 6	1.55	1.63
7 & 8	1.10	1.54
9 - 12	.80	1.07
χ^2	88.167	40.770
df	15	21
p	.000	.006
n	680	359
Years Participated		
1	.72	
2	1.26	
3	1.20	
4	1.21	2.08
5		1.26
χ^2	30.968	40.305
df	9	3
p	.000	.000
n	680	359

The significant relationship in the 1999 survey between years the schools participate in the program and students' participation in the electoral process show that the Kids Voting program does have an impact on youth political socialization. The longer the students are exposed to the program, the more likely they will register, vote, and participate in election related activities. If the pattern established now could persist to adult age, the

decline rate of voting as discussed in Chapter 1 would very possibly be halted.

Although the 2000 data show that the longer the students are in the program, the less likely they will participate, more data are needed to establish a more consistent relationship between years in the program and student participation because only schools that have participated in the program for four or five years were surveyed in 2000.

The relationship between whether parents voted in the election and student participation in the Kids Voting activities at school is presented in Table 3.12 through 3.14, which also show a proportion comparison of student participation based on whether mother or father voted in the election. According to Table 3.12 through Table 3.14, students whose parents voted in the elections also tend to participate more in the Kids Voting activities. In other words, the success of Kids Voting program not only depends on the schools that implement the program but also parents of the students.

Table 3.12 Proportion Comparison of Whether Students Registered to Vote and Whether Parents Voted

	1999	2000
Registered to Vote		
Mother Voted		
Yes	.61	.77
No	.40	.67
χ^2	19.865	2.132
df	1	1
p	.000	.144
n	578	324
Father Voted		
Yes	.62	.78
No	.42	.63
χ	16.898	5.046
df	1	1
p	.000	.025
n	509	312

**Table 3.13 Proportion Comparison of Whether Students Voted
and Whether Parents Voted**

Voted	1999	2000
Mother Voted		
Yes	.56	.76
No	.23	.62
χ^2	50.151	4.785
df	1	1
p	.000	.029
n	580	324
Father Voted		
Yes	.54	.78
No	.32	.57
χ^2	21.614	10.303
df	1	1
p	.000	.001
n	511	312

Table 3.14 Proportion Comparison of Whether Students Participated in the Kids Voting Activities at Their School and Whether Parents Voted

Participated in Kids Voting Activities (0 - 3)

	1999	2000
Mother Voted		
Yes	1.21	1.46
No	.98	1.35
χ^2	8.712	2.437
df	3	3
p	.033	.487
n	580	323
Father Voted		
Yes	1.17	1.46
No	1.11	1.32
χ^2	.762	3.206
df	3	3
p	.859	.361
n	511	310

According to Table 3.12 through Table 3.14, whether mother or female legal guardian voted is significantly related to students' electoral behavior in 1999. It significantly relates to whether students registered, voted, or participated in the Kids Voting activities. In 2000, whether the mother or female legal guardian voted relates only to whether students voted, but not to whether students registered or participated in the Kids Voting activities.

Whether the father or male legal guardian voted in the elections also relates to students' electoral behavior. In both 1999 and 2000 surveys, whether the father or male legal guardian voted relates to whether students registered and voted. Whether the father or male legal guardian voted, however, does not relate to how much students participated in the Kids Voting activities in 1999 or 2000.

Overall, whether parents voted in the election significantly relates to whether students registered, voted, or participated in election related activities. This relationship shows that parents could play an important role in their children's political socialization process.

Student Attitudes toward Voting

The last question in the annual Kids Voting evaluation survey concerns itself with student attitude toward voting, which is measured by whether they think it is important to vote. For all three years, about 90% of the students reported that it is important to vote (Table 3.15).

Table 3.15 Student Attitudes toward Voting (%)

It is Important to Vote.			
	1998	1999	2000
Yes	88.0	90.8	91.4
No	11.9	9.1	8.0
Missing	.2	.1	.6
n	1796	683	362

Table 3.16 Proportion Comparison Based on Grade and Years Participated in the Program (On a Scale of 0 to 1)

It Is Important to Vote			
	1998	1999	2000
Grade			
5 x 6	.92	.93	.92
7 x 8	.89	.90	.91
9 - 12	.84	.93	.92
χ^2	32.085	5.108	13.909
df	7	5	7
p	.000	.403	.053
n	1748	682	360
Years Participated			
1		.85	
2		.91	
3		.90	
4		.94	.95
5			.91
χ^2		7.286	1.014
df		3	1
p		.063	.314
n		682	360

Table 3.16 shows proportion comparison of student attitude toward voting across grade and years participated

in the program. According to Table 3.16, grade level relates to student attitudes toward voting in 1998 and 2000, but not in 1999. The 1999 survey shows that most of the students think it is important to vote across all grade levels. Years participated in the program does not relate to student attitudes toward voting. This shows that overall students do realize that it is important to vote regardless of how many years they have been in the program.

Table 3.17 Proportion Comparison of Student Attitudes toward Voting Based on Whether Parents Voted (On a Scale of 0 to 1)

	1999	2000
It Is Important to Vote		
Mother Voted		
Yes	.94	.94
No	.86	.90
χ^2	10.740	1.071
df	1	1
p	.001	.301
n	581	322
Father Voted		
Yes	.95	.93
No	.86	.91
χ^2	12.761	.530
df	1	1
p	.000	.467
n	512	310

Table 3.17 shows proportion comparison of student attitudes toward voting based on whether parents voted in the election. The 1999 survey shows that students whose parents voted in the election are more likely to think that it is important to vote. The significant relationship shows that parent attitudes toward voting are related to their children's attitudes toward voting. The 1999 result, however, is not sustained in the 2000 data. The 2000 survey shows that whether parents voted does not relate to student attitudes toward voting.

Effects of Grade, Years in the Program and Whether Parents

Voted on Kids Voting Program

The effects of grade, years in the program, and whether parents voted in the election on Kids Voting program are analyzed using linear regression models. Linear regression analysis is performed to examine how much variance of each of the Kids Voting variables can be explained by grade, years participated in the Kids Voting program and whether parents voted. Three models are generated from each of the three student program evaluation surveys. Students' overall experience is the dependent variable for one of the two models. Grade, years

participated in the program, and whether parents voted are entered as independent variables. The second model has student participation in the Kids Voting election as the dependent variable, and grade, years participated in the program, and whether parents voted are entered as independent variables. The third model contains the sum of all Kids Voting variables as the dependent variable, and grade, years in the program, as well as whether parents voted as the independent variables. Student attitudes toward voting are a dichotomous variable so it is not assessed in the linear regression analysis.

The Year 1998 Linear Regression Models

For the 1998 data, only grade is available to be entered as an independent variable. Results of linear regression analysis are presented in Table 3.18. Grade explains 0.7% of the variance of students' experience with the program and 1.5% of the variance of student participation in the program. Grade is also a significant predictor for all the Kids Voting evaluation variables and explains 1.3% of the variance of all Kids Voting variables. The low R squares for all three models also indicate that grade could not explain much of the variance of students'

experience with and participation in the program. The negative beta values show that the younger the students, the more likely for them to have a positive experience with the Kids Voting program and to participate in the program.

Table 3.18: 1998 Linear Regression Modeling (Beta) for Experience with and Participation in Kids Voting

Independent Variable	Dependent Variable		
	Experience	Participation	All
Grade	-.082*	-.122***	-.112***
R ²	.007	.015	.013
F	6.457*	26.235***	12.202***

* $\leq .05$, ** $\leq .01$, *** $\leq .001$

"All" is the sum of all the Kids Voting evaluation variables.

The Year 1999 Linear Regression Models

Three regression models are generated from the 1999 data. All models have F values significant at the .001 level. The three models explain from 14% to 18% of the variance of the dependent variables.

Table 3.19: 1999 Linear Regression Modeling (Beta) for Experience with and Participation in Kids Voting

Independent Variable	Dependent Variable		
	Experience	Participation	All
Grade	-.225***	-.268***	-.268***
Years	.145**	.119**	.152***
Parents Voted	.187***	.162***	.220***
R ²	.141	.141	.185
F	23.826***	25.850***	32.954***

* $\leq .05$, ** $\leq .01$, *** $\leq .001$

"All" is the sum of all the Kids Voting evaluation variables.

Three independent variables are entered into each of the models - grade, years participated in the Kids Voting program, whether parents or legal guardians voted in the election. Grade is a significant predictor for all three models. Table 3.19 shows that grade predicts experience with and participation in the program, all at .001 level of significance. The negative betas demonstrate that younger students are more likely than older students to have a

positive experience with the program and to participate in the program.

Years participated in the program also predict students' experience with and participation in the program. The positive signs associated with the beta values indicate that the longer the students are in the program, the more likely they will like the program and will participate in the program.

Whether parents voted in the 1999 election is also a significant predictor for all three dependent variables. The 1999 data show that for those students whose parents voted in the election, students also tend to like the program and to participate in the Kids Voting elections and activities.

The Year 2000 Linear Regression Models

There are three models generated from the 2000 data. As in the 1999 regression analysis, three independent variables are entered into each model. All three models have statistically significant F values at the .001 level and explain from 5.6% to 12.3% of the variance of the dependent variables.

Table 3.20: 2000 Linear Regression Modeling (Beta) for Experience with and Participation in Kids Voting

Independent Variable	Dependent Variable		
	Experience	Participation	All
Grade	-.085	-.230***	-.174**
Years	-.189***	-.186***	-.220***
Parents Voted	.075	.129*	.033*
R ²	.056	.123	.110
F	5.683***	13.667***	11.939***

* $\leq .05$, ** $\leq .01$, *** $\leq .001$

"All" is the sum of all the Kids Voting evaluation variables.

The relative importance of each of the predictor variables is demonstrated by years participated in the program being the significant predictor for all three dependent variables. The negative beta values indicate that the longer the students are in the program, the less likely they will like the program and participate in the Kids Voting activities. As previously mentioned, this results from the low compliance rate in the 2000 survey when there were a lot more older students in the schools that had participated in the program for 5 years. Grade

significantly predicts participation in the program and the combined measure, but not students' experience with the program. There are also negative signs associated with the beta values from the three dependent variables that grade levels predict. This indicates that the younger the students, the more the students will like the program and participate in the Kids Voting activities. Whether parents voted predicts student participation in the program but not students' experience with the program. Results from both 1999 and 2000 surveys show that student participation in the electoral process is significantly influenced by their parents' electoral behavior.

Conclusion

This chapter presents the objectives, samples, methods, measurement and results of the annual Kids Voting program evaluation survey. Kids Voting overall receives very positive evaluation from the students. A majority of the students indicate that they liked voting, would vote next year and have had fun with the program. Students' overall experience with the program is further correlated with grade, years they have participated in the program and whether their parents voted in the election. It is found

that all four factors significantly contribute to the students' overall experience with the program. Generally, the younger the students, the more likely they will have a good experience with the program. Contradictory effects of years participated in the program on students' experience with the program are found in the 1999 and 2000 survey. In the 1999 survey, the longer the students are in the program, the more likely they find the program enjoyable. However, the 2000 data show that the longer the students are exposed to the program, the less likely they will enjoy the program. Whether parents voted in the election also correlates with students' experience with the curriculum. Students whose parents voted in the election tend to find the program more enjoyable.

Students' participation in the Kids Voting program is also very promising. Approximately two thirds of the students surveyed indicate that they have registered to vote, have voted in the Kids Voting election and have participated in Kids Voting activities. Students' participation in the program is also correlated with grade, years adopted the program and whether parents voted. Grade again is a significant predictor of students' participation in the program. The younger the students, the more likely they will participate in the Kids Voting activities. The

impact of years participated in the program is mixed. In 1999, positive correlations are found. The longer the students are in the program, the more likely they will participate. However, negative correlations are found in the 2000 data. Reasons for the negative correlations are because there are many more younger students in the sample of schools that have participated for four years and fewer young students in schools that have participated for five years. Whether parents voted has positive correlations with students' participation in the program. Students with parents who voted in the election are also more likely to participate.

The three surveys also find that more than 90% of the students indicate that it is important to vote. Grade and years in the program do not systematically predict students' attitude toward voting. In the 1999 survey, whether parents voted successfully predicted students' attitude toward voting. This result, however, is not found in the 2000 survey results.

Linear regression analysis was also performed. It was found that grade, years in the program and whether parents voted are significant predictors of students' experience with and participation in Kids Voting.

The impact of the Kids Voting curriculum overall is very promising. The majority of the students enjoy the curriculum, participate in the activities and think that it is very important to vote. Moreover, according to the 1999 survey, students' experience with the program also affects the adult voting turnout. Chapter 4 will present the effects of Kids Voting program on the Western New York community to show exactly how the program sustains the democratic process in our region.

**CHAPTER 4: 1997 AND 1998 KIDS VOTING WESTERN NEW YORK
COMMUNITY SURVEY**

The University at Buffalo participated in the evaluative studies of the influence of Kids Voting program the first time in 1997 when the Department of Communication at the University at Buffalo conducted a telephone survey for Kids Voting Western New York. The same survey was conducted again in 1998.

Objectives

The objectives of both the 1997 and the 1998 telephone surveys were to assess the awareness, impression and impact of the Kids Voting program on Western New York. Kids Voting reaches from 35,000 to 78,000 students in Western New York. It is thus important to examine the impact of the program on the Western New York community.

Sample and Methods

Random telephone interviews of 744 Erie County voters in both Kids Voting participating and non-participating school districts were conducted in 1997 from November 6 to

November 9. In 1998, random telephone interviews were administered to 750 Erie County voters between November 5 and November 8. Both the 1997 and the 1998 telephone survey studies were conducted by Goldhaber Research Associates of Amherst, New York.

Measurement

To measure community awareness of Kids Voting, interviewed voters were asked whether they could recall a program during the election in Erie County where school children could go to the polls with their parents.

Voters' impressions of the program were measured on a four-point scale by asking interviewees whether they had a very favorable, favorable, unfavorable or very unfavorable impression of Kids Voting. Answers are coded as 4 through 1.

The impact of Kids Voting on Western New York was measured by four questions pertaining to decision to vote, political discussion and whether interviewees were able to bring their children with them to the polls on the election day. Questions on political discussion and whether they brought their children to the polls were asked only to voters with children in kindergarten through grade 12.

For decision to vote, there were two questions. The first question was how important was the Kids Voting program in the interviewees' decision to vote. Answers to this question are coded on a four-point scale from 4 through 1: very important, somewhat important, not very important and not at all important. Secondly, voters were asked whether Kids Voting was the determining factor in their decision to vote, in other words, whether they would not have voted except for the Kids Voting program.

As noted above, the impact of Kids Voting on political discussion and whether interviewees brought their children to the polls on election day was assessed only on voters with children in kindergarten through grade 12. For the 1997 data, among 740 valid cases, 139 (18.8%) interviewees had children in K through 12 while 601 (81.2%) did not. As for the 1998 data, among 750 valid cases, 206 (27.5%) interviewees had children in grades K through 12, and 544 (72.5%) did not. The influence of Kids Voting was further assessed by asking the 139 voters in the 1997 telephone interview and the 206 voters in the 1998 telephone interview whether their children asked them questions or initiated discussions about candidates or issues while the election was going on. Moreover, for the 1998 survey, one more question on political discussion was added to the

questionnaire. Voters were further asked whether they talked about political candidates and issues with their family members or friends in their home. Fourthly, the influence of Kids Voting was measured by asking the 139 voters in 1997 and the 206 voters in 1998 whether their children were able to go to the polls with them on election day.

1997 Community Survey Results

The data show that 87% of the Erie County voters are aware of the Kids Voting program. Results are shown in Table 4.1. The 1997 data also show that 89% of the voters have a very favorable or favorable impression of the program. Results are shown in Table 4.2. Moreover, Table 4.3 and Table 4.4 show that 34.9% of the interviewees think that Kids Voting is a very important or somewhat important factor in their decision to vote and that 15% of the interviewees think that Kids Voting program is a determining factor in their decision to vote. Table 4.3 also shows that 62% of the 139 Erie County voters, which is 18.8% of the interviewees who had children in kindergarten through grade 12, report that their children had asked them questions or initiated discussion about candidates or

issues when the election was going on. Furthermore, 66% of the 139 voters report that their children were able to go to the polls with them on election day.

Table 4.1: Awareness Measures of Kids Voting Program by Erie County Voters

	Yes	No	N
1997 Election (736)	640	96	
	87%	13%	
1998 Election (748)	618	130	
	82.4*	17.3*	

Table 4.2: Impression of Kids Voting Program by Erie County Voters

	Very Favorable	Favorable	Unfavorable	Very Unfavorable	Mean	SD
1997	48.5%	40.5%	7.3%	3.8%	3.34	.77
	687 (n=333)	(n=278)	(n=50)	(n=26)		
1998	48.1%	39.6%	9.8%	2.4%	3.33	.75
	694 (n=334)	(n=275)	(n=68)	(n=17)		

Note : Very favorable through very unfavorable were coded 4 through 1 for the calculation of Mean and SD.

Table 4.3: Importance of Kids Voting Program in Erie County Voters' Decision to Vote

	Very Important	Somewhat Important	Not Very Important	Not at all Important	Mean	SD
1997	17.4%	17.5%	9.9%	55.1%	1.97	1.19
	724 (n=126)	(n=127)	(n=72)	(n=399)		
1998	17.9%	13.2%	9.2%	59.7%	1.89	1.2
	720 (n=129)	(n=95)	(n=66)	(n=430)		

Note : Very important through not at all important were coded 4 through 1 for the calculation of Mean and SD.

Table 4.4: Kids Voting Program Was a Determining Factor in Decision to Vote

	Yes	No	N
1997 Election	34 10.5%	286 88%	(325)
1998 Election	26 9.1%	260 90.9%	(286)

Table 4.5: Voters Whose Children Had Asked Them Questions or Initiated Discussions about Candidates and Issues

	Yes	No	N
1997 Election	36 52.3%	52 37.7%	(138)
1998 Election	131 53.9%	74 9.9%	(205)

Table 4.6: Voters Whose Children Were Able to Go to the Polls with Them on Election Day

	Yes	No	N
1997 Election	90 66.2%	46 33.8%	(136)
1998 Election	137 66.8%	68 33.2%	(205)

1998 Community Survey Results

The 1998 data show that 82.4% of the Erie County voters are aware of the Kids Voting Program. Results are shown in Table 4.1. The data also show that 87.7% of the interviewees have a very favorable or favorable impression of the Kids Voting program. Results are shown in Table 4.2. As for the impact of Kids Voting on interviewees' voting decision, 31.1% of the voters mention that Kids Voting is a very important or important factor in their decision to vote. Results are shown in Table 4.3. Moreover, Table 4.4 shows that 9% of the 286 valid cases say that Kids Voting is a determining factor in their decision to vote.

The 1998 data also show that for the 206 (27.5%) interviewees who had children in kindergarten through grade 12, 63.9% of them report that their children asked them questions or initiated discussions regarding candidates or issues while the election was going on. Results are shown in Table 4.5. Furthermore, Table 4.7 shows that 89.8% of the interviewees also mention that they talked about candidates and issues with their family members or friends in their home. Table 4.6 indicates that 56.8% of the 206

voters were able to bring their children to the polls with them on election day.

Table 4.7: Voters Who Had Talked about Candidates and Issues with Family Members and Friends

	Yes	No	N
1998 Election	185	21	
(206)	89.8%	10.2%	

Conclusion

Telephone surveys on the awareness, impression and impact of the Kids Voting program have shown that Erie County voters are highly aware of the program and most of the voters have a very favorable or favorable impression of the program. The impact of the Kids Voting program was assessed by the Erie County voters' decision to vote, and if they have children in Kindergarten through grade 12, whether their children initiated political discussion as well as whether their children were able to go to the polls with them on election day. About one third of the interviewees stated that the Kids Voting program was a very important or important factor in their decision to vote. When asked whether the Kids Voting program was a

determining factor in interviewees' decision to vote, 325 out of 744 voters in 1997 and 286 out of 750 voters answered the question. As a result, for the 325 valid cases in 1997 and the 286 valid cases in 1998, about one tenth of the voters said that Kids Voting was a determining factor in their decision to vote. In other words, those voters who identified the determining role of the Kids Voting program in their decision to vote would not have voted except for the program. The 10 percent of voters who indicated that the Kids Voting program was the determining factor for their decision to vote showed that the Kids Voting program reached the Western New York community and had quite a significant impact on Erie County voters' decision to vote.

For voters who have children in kindergarten through grade 12, about two thirds of them reported that their children asked them questions or initiated discussions about candidates or issues while the election was going on. About two thirds of them also said that their children were able to go to the polls with them on election day. Moreover, for the 1998 data, a majority of the voters (89.9%) also reported that they talked about candidates and issues with their spouse, other family members or friends in their home.

**CHAPTER 5: SCHOOL, FAMILY AND THE MEDIA AS AGENTS
OF CIVIC EDUCATION**

In the previous chapters, the design and results of the Kids Voting program assessment surveys were presented. Along with the periodic program assessment surveys, the Departments of Communication and Political Science at the University at Buffalo also conducted individual studies to assess the impact of the program on students' political behavior. This chapter and chapter 6 lay a conceptual foundation for the discussion on the impact of Kids Voting on media use, political talk and political participation in chapter 7. This chapter will first look at the conceptualization, goals, characteristics and approaches of civic education. Secondly, school, family and the media as agents of political socialization will also be discussed. Chapter 6 will discuss the theoretical and practical dimensions of discursive democracy, and Chapter 7 will empirically explore the relationships between the Kids Voting program, student media use, student political conversation and student political participation.

Conceptualization of Civic Education

Democratic theories vary in the requirements toward citizenship as well as to the goals and practices of civic education. Civic education has been praised and urged from various perspectives, such as communication, state legitimacy and public deliberation. Dewey (1916) recognized that democracy is a mode of associated living and a joint communicated experience (Dewey, 1916). Democracy and education are intertwined in the way that a society is basically a community of learners who interact with each other and learn from each other, and this learning process itself is where democracy resides (Dewey, 1916). Galston (1991) further notes that the state possesses the legitimacy to use public education to teach children virtues required for the continued stability of democracy. Gutmann's (1987) point of view on civic education centers on pedagogy. Gutmann states that civic pedagogy should be oriented toward the "ability to deliberate" so as to "participate in conscious social reproduction" (Gutmann, 1987, p. 39).

The recognition of civic education as an important aspect of democracy has fluctuated with landmark historical events in American history, such as the Vietnam War and the

Cold War. In fact, between the mid-1960s and the late 1990s, education theorists had been cynical toward civic education, which was seen as an attempt to instill an appreciation for the principles of the American political system. The driving force behind the cynicism was the desire to eliminate certain dark tendencies thought to be encouraged by American civic education, such as imperialism, repression, racism and sexism (Ceaser and McGuinn, 1998). However, the field of civic education has experienced a remarkable renaissance of interest since the late 1990s (Torney-Purta et al., 1999).

Aims and Goals of Civic Education

Since its renaissance in the late 1990s, the purposes and goals of civic education are widely discussed. Some scholars maintain that citizenship education is about "empowering people" (Saha, 2000) and the very outcome of the empowerment is to enable people to behave like citizens (Conrad & Hedin, 1977; Janowitz, 1988). Other scholars note that civic education is values education and that prospective citizens should be equipped with the capacity to challenge those values rationally (Gutmann, 1987; Wright, 1993). Gutmann (1987) notes that civic education

itself implies value education, which teaches students the ability to use those values in any situation, to evaluate the validity of information that comes to them and the moral acceptability of an action. Gutmann (1987) further notes that with the inculcation of habits and values which good democratic citizens will possess, at the same time, students should also question the demands that appear to threaten the foundational ideals of democratic sovereignty, such as respect for persons (Gutmann, 1987). The other aim of civic education is the teaching of specific skills, dispositions and information helpful to performing the tasks of being a citizen in the strict public sense, such as in voting, obeying the laws, paying taxes and participating on juries and in politics. This part is often supplemented through student involvement in community service and student government (Ceaser and McGuinn, 1998). Moreover, Gutmann (1995) claims that civic education requires teaching the skills associated with autonomy. She actually appealed to the skills for effective participation in political discussion and debate. The third and often the most controversial goal of civic education is the attempt to cultivate an attachment to the nation's principles and institutions as objects worthy of respect, devotion and sacrifice (Ceaser and McGuinn, 1998).

However, civic education undermines democratic principles if it inculcates attitudes of loyalty or obedience to government without also promoting critical reflection (Brighouse, 1998).

Characteristics of Civic Education

Boyer (1990) states that civic education programs should have the following characteristics. After all, social learning should be as important as cognitive learning when it comes to political socialization (Braungart and Braungart, 1997). Firstly, civic education is concerned with communication. Communication is required to carry on the work of democracy, such as town meetings, city councils, study groups, public deliberation, informal conversation, citizenship training and the media. Secondly, civic education also must provide students with knowledge regarding social issues and institutions. In fact, studies have shown that civic education consistently has greater impact on citizens' knowledge and values than on their political behavior (Bratton et al., 1999). Thirdly, the spirit of civics should be embodied in the classrooms and at the school. In other words, the school and the classroom, as civic communities, should provide

students opportunities to participate, just like what they will be asked to do later in their lives. Fourthly, education for citizenship means helping students make connections between what they learn and how they live. Lastly, civic education should be sensitive to diversities and differences.

Approaches and Contexts of Political Learning

Political socialization is a developmental process by which children and adolescents acquire cognitions, attitudes and behaviors relating to their political environment (Langton, 1969; Hess and Torney, 1967; Hyman, 1959). How do the young learn about politics? Four major approaches were used by scholars to explain how political learning took place (Jennings and Niemi, 1974). First, the observational learning approach says that the young learn by observing the behaviors of others, especially through modeling, matching, imitation, copying, cue-taking and identification. Family is an important setting for observational learning. Peer groups and teachers are also prominent actors in the learning process.

The second approach is called reinforcement, which says that behavior that is positively rewarded will be

sustained and behavior that is negatively rewarded will be discontinued. For example, the child could be positively rewarded by imitating the parents and negatively rewarded by disagreeing with the parents. Schools could positively reward students by encouraging students to be concerned about politics or to participate in political activities and negatively reward students by specifying the drawbacks of non-participation.

The third approach looks at socialization as a cognitive process, which assumes that individuals are active agents rather than passive in the process. Individuals possess the intellectual and cognitive characteristics to mediate external stimuli. These individual characteristics influence socializing efforts of the family, school, and other agents and limit the extent of learning. Examples of these characteristics are individual differences in the ability to comprehend, personal needs and compliance needs.

The fourth approach is called resource availability, which is based on the premise that at the societal level, there is a stratification system. The resource availability approach states that people of different strata have different access to resources most useful in the political process. Children from families of different

social status may have different opportunities to acquire certain skills valued by society. Variables that reflect the operation of a stratification system and resource availability include an individual's social economic status, race, gender, age and geographical region. This context of socialization serves as general categories indicating more specific influences, attitudes and interpersonal experiences (Jennings & Niemi, 1974; Hess & Torney, 1967).

The last one is an institutional approach, which looks at institutions, such as the family and the school, that influence children by direct teaching of political attitudes and values. These institutions might also induct them into roles and behaviors appropriate to family and school, but those behaviors might be generated into attitudes toward political figures and government later in their lives.

One of the purposes of the studies is to examine the impact of the Kids Voting program on students' political behavior at school, at home and how they acquire information from the media. As a result, school, family, and the media as agents of political socialization are further discussed below.

School as a Socializing Agent

Hess and Torney (1967) specify the role that the school plays in the political socialization process. Hess and Torney (1967) state that the school is the most important and effective instrument of political socialization in the United States. First of all, loyalty to the nation is reinforced in the schools through permanently displaying the flag, daily repeating of the pledge of allegiance to the flag and singing patriotic songs. In addition, classrooms and libraries also display pictures of historical figures, historical monuments or other symbols and sites of national interest. These rituals establish an emotional orientation toward country and flag as well as reinforce the respect for the pledge and the national anthem.

Second, the schools also provide orientation toward governmental figures and institutions. Schools usually emphasize on topics dealing with governmental persons, such as the President, Mayor or Senators, as well as institutions, such as the Supreme Court or the Congress. Hess and Torney (1967) also find that basic attachment to the nation and the government as well as the acceptance of compliance to law and authority are relatively unaffected

by social class and by the mediation of intelligence in the learning process.

Third, the duties of citizens are also taught by schools. For example, Hess and Torney (1967) find that compliance to rules and authority is the major focus of civics education in elementary schools. The three items rated by teachers of young children as important include the law, the police and the child's obligation to conform to schools rules and laws of the community. The socialization of duties of citizens by schools at early age levels emphasizes behavior that related the children emotionally to the country and impresses upon them the necessity for obedience and conformity.

Fourth, the schools also socialize the young with the conceptions of rights and powers of citizens, such as the citizen's right to participate in government, the right to express opinion, effectiveness of the government as well as voting. However, not all of the students are equal in their senses of efficacy. It is found that students' senses of efficacy are mediated by social status and levels of intelligence. Hess and Torney (1967) find that the sense of efficacy is greater in children of high intelligence and in children of high status. In addition, participation in political discussion and concern with political issues are

more frequent among children of high intelligence and social status. Political activity is higher in children of high social status. Whether election campaigns are followed by the students is also strongly related to social status. Hess and Torney (1967) suggest that these findings of the political inactiveness of underprivileged children present a serious problem for the society and confront the schools with a more difficult task in civic education.

Others factors that affect the role the school could play in the political socialization process include school size, student scholarship and grade.

School size could be an important factor in determining the range of student social participation (Morgan & Alwin, 1980). Typically, students have more chance to participate in small schools than in large schools. In other words, smaller schools would have a more prominent role in the political socialization process.

Student scholarship is also strongly associated with political interest and political discussion (Garramone, 1983). It is found that students with a strong scholarly orientation are also more likely to anticipate future political activity (Garramone & Atkin, 1986).

Grade is another factor that affects the relationship between the school and students' political socialization

process. Grade in school and instructional method have statistically significant, but moderate to marginal effects on children's political knowledge (Coway, Wyckoff, Feldbaum & Ahern, 1981). According to Hess and Torney (1967), the elementary school plays a crucial role in teaching conceptions, beliefs and attitudes about the operation of political system. Langton (1969) reports that formal civics training in the secondary school has a minimal impact on most socialization indices. The above mentioned studies suggest that the younger the students, the more likely the school curricula affect their political orientation.

In sum, attempts by scholars to demonstrate the impact of parents and schools on political socialization have yielded only minor evidence that the children modeled their parents' political orientations. School curricula also accounted for little difference on children's political orientations (Jennings & Niemi, 1968a, 1968b; Langton & Jennings, 1968; Langton, 1969).

Family as a Socializing Agent

Although school is an important factor in the process of youth political socialization, family also plays a

central role in the political learning process of youth. According to Hess and Torney (1967), the family, especially the parents, participate in the socialization of political perception and attitudes in three ways. First, parents transmit attitudes which they consider valuable for their child to hold. This is called the Accumulation Model. The family operates as an agent inculcating attitudes and values which reflect community consensus or transmits attitudes which represent differences of opinions existing within the community. The family also transmits idiosyncratic attitudes, which are attitudes that do not correspond to any recognized or defined division within the community. Second, the family presents examples that children imitate, such as parental affiliation with a political party. This is an Identification Model. In fact, studies have shown that the correlations between parents' party identification and children's are high (Hyman, 1959). In addition to party identification, parents can also socialize children to be politically active. Children learn to value modes of political involvement which they observe in their parents. Third, experiences in family relationships are later generalized to political objects, an Interpersonal Transfer Model. The home provides the child's first experience with a

hierarchical social system. Through this experience, children develop expectations and behavior patterns relating to the hierarchy of authority and learn to comply to its regulations. This experience thus establishes a frame of reference for the later encounter with the social system.

Family as a major agent of political learning is the focus of early political socialization research. The family environment appears to play an important role in the development of certain political variables such as party identification, knowledge, participation and efficacy (Chaffee, McLeod & Wackman, 1973; Dawson & Prewitt, 1969; Hyman, 1959; Greenstein, 1969; Jennings & Neimi, 1974). However, other research also indicates that the potency of parental influence is overrated, particularly regarding the transmission of partisan attitudes and opinions across generations (Hess & Torney, 1967; Connell, 1972; Jennings & Neimi, 1968). For example, Jennings and Niemi (1974) find that parents have little direct impact on students' conceptual apparatuses, except a small number of students from highly politicized families with homogeneous parents. Jennings and Niemi (1974) also find that even though partisanship is strongly passed on from one generation to the next, party images are not. In other words, the impact

of family on the youth takes place in the form of partisan similarity, but in the face of changing partisan images.

Hess and Torney (1967) also find that the family as a socialization agent is not a significant force for the development of attitudes toward political objects or the growth of active political involvement. They find that the family's primary effect is to support consensually held attitudes in the community or the nation rather than to inculcate idiosyncratic attitudes, such as party and candidate preferences. The family's influence is mainly at reinforcing the values of other social or political institutions.

Communication scholars study family as a setting for the transmission of media consumption behavior. Family provides the young a setting for news media consumption. Youth media use patterns do not simply occur to the young. Parents have a direct impact on their children's media use patterns (Himmelweit, Oppenheim & Vince, 1958; Coway, Wyckoff, Feldbaum & Ahern, 1981). Those patterns can be traced to social determinants that are rooted in both organismic variables (e.g. age) and structural factors, such as the family's socioeconomic status or parent's educational levels and patterns of news media use (Chaffee & Tims, 1982). Media use patterns of the youth are indeed

a function of parents' media use patterns, which in turn are the product of parents' educational attainment and socioeconomic status. Moreover, Chaffee, McLeod and Atkin's (1971) study indicates that the viewing behavior of the parents has a significant influence over the child's exposure pattern. Moderate correlations are found between the amount of news viewed by the parents and the 6th and 7th grade child.

The direction of socialization is not just one way. The young also have the potential to influence their parents in various aspects of political socialization. Chaffee, McLeod and Atkin (1971) notes a "reverse influence" from adolescent to parent in such a way that the adolescent's media consumption stimulates that of the parent. In other words, there can be a "trickle up" effect on media use from the young to their parents.

The Media as Socializing Agent

Klapper (1960) and Gerbner (1960) study the relationship between the media and political socialization and find that the media have little direct effect on social attitudes and behavior. The media are treated as secondary socializing agents which reinforce existing views through

selective exposure. However, Chaffee, Ward and Tipton (1970) assert that Klapper's generalizations are based mainly on studies of opinions on controversial issues, whereas the most likely effects of the media in political socialization are in the acquisition of political knowledge and the building of interest in public affairs. Chaffee et al. (1970) further state that knowledge and interest are important indices of political socialization, and should precede the development of particular opinion.

Adolescents' media use for political information should be treated as an agent of political socialization rather than a form of political activity. They urge to consider media use as an independent variable in the political socialization process, not merely as one of many dependent variables. In their study, they treat media use as an independent variable and looked at the impact of public affairs viewing during the 1968 national election campaign on adolescents' political cognitions and political behaviors. Newspaper public affairs exposure precedes increased knowledge and activity. Chaffee et al. (1970) further conclude that the media are not simply a supplement to interpersonal communication, but constitute a major independent agency of personal political growth. The young contribute both informative and opinion-making powers to

the media. Furthermore, the more knowledgeable are more likely to say they rely on the media, whereas the less knowledgeable turn to more personal sources for their information and opinions.

Schramm, Lyle and Parker (1961) find considerable public affairs viewing among adolescents but not among younger children. Twelfth graders are more likely to have seen the 1958 election coverage and to have liked it than 10th or 8th graders. Chaffee et al. (1970) find that parents are rated as a more important source of information and opinions for the junior high group, and there is a tendency for senior high students to rate the mass media higher as a source of information. However, comparing the sources, the mass media are clearly rated as the most important source of information and personal opinions. Friends are the least important source. Teachers are more of a source of information than of opinion.

The mass media were not considered as agents of political socialization until the 1970s. Atkin and Gantz (1978) state that television news viewing begins early in elementary school and increases monotonically with age. Studies have shown the important role mass media play as agents of political socialization (e.g. Kraus & Davis, 1976).

The mass media, as potential agents for political socialization, have been studied for their cognitive, affective and behavioral effects on youth (Garramone, 1983). Cognitively, the media can either contribute or hinder political knowledge gain or political interest. Affectively, the media can either contribute or hinder likings for political figures. The media can either stimulate or hamper political behaviors, such as political conversation or political participation.

Chaffee et al. (1970) find that public affairs media exposure during the 1968 presidential campaign is moderately related to adolescents' political knowledge. Atkin and Gantz (quoted in Drew & Reese, 1984) find that the amount of news exposure is related to children's ability to identify leaders, issues, cities and countries in the news. Dominick (1972) surveys junior high school students in New York City, and students report that the mass media are the primary sources of information about the president (83 percent), vice-president (85 percent), Congress (59 percent) and the Supreme Court (50 percent).

Hawkins, Pingree and Roberts (1975) report that preadolescents who are heavy users of the mass media for political information in the 1972 campaign display substantially greater knowledge about Watergate the

following Spring, compared to less exposed respondents. In a study of upper elementary school students, Conway, Stevens and Smith (1975) show that exposure to television news programming is moderately associated with perceptions of policy differences between political parties, awareness of the law-making process in government and knowledge of government roles.

**Cognitive Effects: Political Knowledge, Political
Opinion and Political Interest**

Network television news exposure is strongly related to political interest, political knowledge, the perceived importance of political figures and countries, and the holding of political opinions (Garramone, 1983; Rubin, 1976).

Studies show that newspaper exposure contributed to the acquisition of political knowledge and levels of political interest. However, television exposure has negative effects on levels of political knowledge and political interest (Jackson-Beech, 1979). Coway, Wyckoff, Feldbaum and Ahern (1981) combine both print and electronic news media use and find that children's news media use and level of political knowledge function as primary sources of

causal effects for one another. Moreover, knowledge appears to be a more important influence on news media use for boys than for girls.

Garramoone and Atkin (1986) survey 7th graders and 10th graders and find that television news exposure is more strongly correlated with overall political knowledge than is print news exposure. Television news exposure is also the best predictor of both current events and fundamental knowledge, although the relationship is much stronger for the former. The second strongest predictor of political knowledge is newsmagazine reading.

A study of high school students finds a strong relationship between broadcast news exposure and political interest (Johnson, 1973). Research with adult voters further suggests that television news produces increased interest in political affairs (Atkin et al., 1976).

Atkin and Gantz (1978) survey elementary school students in kindergarten through fifth grades during Spring 1973 on the impact of television news viewing on knowledge, discussion, interest and information seeking. Atkin and Gantz (1978) find that the strongest predictor of knowledge is grade in school and that among the children in 4th and 5th grades, national news exposure is moderately associated with political knowledge. Moreover, Atkin and Gantz (1978)

employ cross-lagged correlational analyses and find that news viewing is the predominant causal variable in the relationship with knowledge. Compared to national news broadcasting, Saturday news broadcasting shows a stronger causal effect to knowledge gain. Furthermore, Atkin and Gantz (1978) also find that children's interest in political affairs is modestly but definitely associated with news exposure and that children who watch more news tend to seek more information afterwards, compared to those viewing less news programs.

Affective Effects

Rubin (1976) surveys 401 students and finds that television viewing is associated with more favorable attitudes toward government. Students who view higher levels of news and discussion programs indicate more favorable attitudes toward the government. Rubin (1976) also finds that the above relationship is stronger among the younger children who exhibit positive, emotional attachment to country, loyalty to and trust of authority, and only vague identity with political institutions. Not until later in childhood and early adolescence do the young acquire more precise knowledge about the structure and

workings of the political environment, including political roles and conflicts in the political system. However, research also shows that network news and public affairs programs have a heavy emphasis on negative information and anti-institutional themes, and because of television's high credibility, viewers grow less favorable toward political institutions (Robinson, 1976). Berman and Stookey (1980) survey 600 adolescents aged 13 through 17 and their parents and find a negative relationship between the amount of television watching and support for government. Among various program types, entertainment, news shows and cartoons are all negatively related to support for government. Only juvenile entertainment programs are positively related to support for government. Among news programs, late night local news has the largest negative relationship with support for government.

Atkin (1977) finds that periodic candidate advertising produces both cognitive and affective impact on the 120 students in the third through sixth grades surveyed. Campaign advertising and news directed at adult voters play a significant role in socializing children to the political environment. Atkin (1977) notes that children who view political commercials for a candidate have more knowledge about that candidate and have greater liking toward the

candidate than those who are less exposed to these messages. Moreover, since younger children are at a more primitive stage of cognitive development, they gain less knowledge from viewing political ads than the more capable older children. On the other hand, since they have less well formed attitudinal predispositions, these younger children are influenced more along the affective dimension than older children. The more intellectually capable older children gain the most knowledge per unit of viewing, while the more impressionable younger children develop the most positive affects toward political candidates while watching the ads. Political commercials have a substantial impact in creating favorable affective feeling for candidates among young viewers in the television audience. Prisuta (1979) also finds that adolescent preference for news viewing is significantly associated with higher levels of normative support, higher levels of respect for tradition and institutional loyalty and lower levels of individualism. Weigel and Jessor (1973) do research on high school students and college freshmen and find that involvement with television is associated with a syndrome of conventionality, such as less liberal, more negative attitudes toward drug use and less engagement in activist behavior, for males and females at various age levels.

Exposure to newspapers is more important than exposure to television in regard not only to informing adolescents and adults about government, but also in shaping affective orientations (Clarke and Fredin, 1978).

Behavioral Effects: Political Participation

Behaviorally, the media could affect youth political participation. Garramoone and Atkin (1986) find that print news exposure is strongly related to anticipated participation. Although school, family and the media are all important agents of political socialization of youth, their effects are not exclusive. For example, the media will not be influential without information from parents, peers and the classroom. The process of youth political socialization is actually a function of all the above mentioned agencies and should be studied with various factors combined to provide a more complete understanding of the complicated, intertwined political socialization experience of the young.

Conclusion

Conceptualization, aims and goals as well as characteristics of civic education were examined in this chapter. Approaches to explain political learning by youth were also outlined. Three major agents of political socialization were closely examined: school, family and the media. Evidence and nature of influence from these three agents were discussed. Three dimensions of media effect on political socialization were also examined. Previous literature showed that the media affect the young on three dimensions: cognitively, affectively and behaviorally. Evidence of media effects on these three dimensions were presented.

Research results examined in this chapter indicate the boundary and nature of influence from school, family and the media on youth political socialization. Results presented in this chapter explain findings in Chapter 7. For example, for the young, television is the primary source of political information. Moreover, youth gain most of their political information from the media or from their parents, rather than from their friends. This explains the lower level of political discussions among students than with family members.

Political socialization research has declined for the past two decades. As a result, some of the literature reviewed in this chapter and later in Chapter 7 is more than two decades old. The relevance of previous political socialization research findings to today's youth is unclear. However, this study attempts to examine and compare past research results with new findings and hopefully would shed new light on the process of youth political socialization.

CHAPTER 6: THEORIES AND PRACTICES OF DISCURSIVE DEMOCRACY

The Discursive Turn

Theories of democracy have taken a discursive turn in the 1990s. Prior to that turn, democratic theories were seen in terms of aggregation of preferences, voting or representation. Deliberative democracy, by definition, is that a democratic system is maintained by decision making by discussion among free and equal citizens. In other words, democratic legitimacy is sought in the ability of all free, equal and rational agents to participate in making a collective decision which will affect them: this is the democratic part (Dryzek, 2000; Elster, 1998). Moreover, the decision is made by means of arguments and deliberation "offered by and to participants who are committed to the values of rationality and impartiality" (Elster, 1998, p. 8). This is the discursive part.

The term "deliberative democracy" and "discursive democracy" have been used interchangeably. However, discursive democracy is actually a better term for three reasons. First, the term "discursive democracy" indicates that decision making is necessarily a collective social process which has to involve communication. On the other

hand, deliberation can be a personal decision process upon which communication is not required. Second, deliberation connotes calm and reasoned argument, while a discursive process makes different forms of communication possible, including voices from the margins that do not follow deliberative rules. Third, discursive democracy is preferred because discourse in the Habermasian sense means freedom in the ability to raise and challenge arguments. As a result, contestations across discourses in public sphere become the key component of democracy. Based on the above arguments raised by Dryzek (2000), the term "discursive democracy" will be used throughout this chapter. However, the term "deliberative democracy" will be used also to be consistent with the sources cited.

The idea of discursive democracy is as old as democracy itself. Both came into being in Athens in the 5th century B.C. Discursive democracy differs itself from democracy. In a democracy, people form their opinions at home and bring them to the voting booth. If no majority emerges, people go back home to reconsider their votes (Elster, 1998). In this type of democracy, citizens are isolated from each other in forming their opinions about issues. However, in a discursive democracy, there are contestations and discussions among citizens. It is more

than a decision made. It is about "proposing, listening, concerting, changing one's opinion, in order to form in common a common will" (Sieyes³, 1789, quoted in Elster, 1998, p. 3).

In fact, the very essence of discursive democracy is around transformation rather than simply the aggregation of preferences. It is about transformation because decision making becomes more than a process to choose among given alternatives (Elster, 1988). Decision making becomes a process of generating new ideas where citizens could engage in brainstorming new alternatives. The transformation is brought about by deliberation. In contrast to voting, interest aggregation, constitutional rights or self-government. Deliberation, engaged by competent citizens and becomes the authenticity of democracy, makes substantive control possible, as opposed to symbolic control. Moreover, the only condition for authentic deliberation is the requirement that preferences are reflected through communication in non-coercive fashion. Authentic democracy is then the degree that reflective preferences influence collective outcomes. This requirement in turn rules out domination via the exercise of power, manipulation, indoctrination, propaganda,

³ Sieyes was a delegate to the French Assemblée Constituante of 1789.

deception, expressions of mere self-interest, threats and attempts to impose ideological conformity (Dryzek, 2000).

According to Gambetta (1998) and Fearon (1998), there are several reasons why discussion is preferred. First of all, discussion allows for the revelation of private information through which understanding among citizens can be achieved. Consequently, discussion induces a particular mode of justifying demands because personal views are communicated. Thirdly, discussions legitimize the ultimate choice and make for superior decisions, especially in terms of distributive justice. Fourthly, discussions also allow for a larger consensus and improve the moral or intellectual equalities of the participants.

The pragmatic implication of discursive democracy has two aspects. First, one might ask whether the deliberation necessarily leads to tangible outcomes. In fact, Przeworski (1998) defines deliberation in terms of its outcomes as the endogenous change of preferences resulting from discussion (Przeworski, 1998). Nino (1996) defines the ultimate outcome of deliberation as unanimous consensus, which could be achieved through a process of "moral discussion with a certain time limit within which a majoritarian decision must be taken" (p. 119). According to Nino (1996), democracy is defined as a process of moral

discussion with a time limit. This method was seen as having greater epistemic power for providing access to morally correct decisions than any other collective decision-making procedure (Nino, 1996).

The second pragmatic perspective of discursive democracy relies on the implicit norms of propositional truth, normative rightness and truthfulness of deliberation. Habermas (1996) maintains that the presuppositions of rational discourse have a "steering effect" on the course of political discussion. And because of norms of rational discourse, even self-interested speakers are forced to argue in terms of the public interest (Gambetta, 1998; Johnson, 1998; Elster, 1998).

Instrumental Rationality and Communicative Rationality

To the extent that the essence of discursive democracy relies on deliberation engaged by equal and free citizens in a non-coercive fashion, discursive democracy is itself the embodiment of a communicative rationality. Dryzek (1996) specifies two types of rationality: instrumental rationality or objective rationality, and communicative rationality. Instrumental rationality is defined in terms of "the ability to devise, select, and effect good means to

clarified ends" (Dryzek, 1996, p. 4). It is the idea that rational choices concerning theories, beliefs, values and morals should be made through reference to a set of objective standards that are equally applicable - and accessible - to all individuals. On the other hand, communicative rationality is based on reflection, talk and communicative action. It concerns itself with culture, society and person. It is rationality achieved in the form of uncoerced and undistorted interaction among competent individuals (Dryzek, 1996).

In fact, both instrumental rationalization and communicative rationalization are products of modern forms of consciousness. Both liberate individuals from unthinking conformity to traditional values, customs and other kinds of normative constraint and release individuals to engage in rational action (Dryzek, 1996). In addition to this similarity, there are several differences among these two types of rationalization. In fact, instrumental rationality has received more criticism than appraisal. Max Weber maintained that instrumental rationality expressed in bureaucratization creates an "iron cage" around human existence. Moreover, Habermas (1995) notes the colonization of the lifeworld. A colonization of the lifeworld occurs "when the systemic media of money and power

begin to displace communicative sociation in core spheres of action within which the three processes of symbolic reproduction take place: cultural transmission, social integration and socialization" (White, 1988, p. 111).

Two types of rationality also generate two possibilities of democracy. Instrumental rationality is associated with both bureaucratic-authoritarian and liberal democratic political forms, while the communicative rationality is associated with more participatory democracy, which Barber (1984) called "strong democracy." Politics in its participatory form becomes increasingly "discursive, educational, oriented to truly public interests, and needful of active citizenship" (Dryzek, 1996, p. 13). In other words, the political form of communicative rationality is discursive democracy. Politics in its instrumental form is "voting, strategy, private interests, bargaining, exchange, spectacle and limited involvement" (Dryzek, 1996, p. 13).

Communicative Rationality and Its Complementary Function

The shortcomings of instrumental rationality, in terms of an "iron cage" and the colonization of the lifeworld, can actually be lessened by implementing practices of communicative rationality. In reality, deliberation is never

used as the only procedure for making collective decisions. It is always supplemented by voting or bargaining or both (Elster, 1998). A combination of instrumental rationality, manifested by voting, and communicative rationality, shown by deliberation and discussion, will generate a system within which decisions are made directly by voters who argue, bargain and communicate with one another so as the essence of democracy can be achieved.

Political Talk, the Formation of the Public and Discursive Democracy

The implication of communicative rationality is the role political conversation plays in modern democracy. Conversation is the key factor for the formation of "the public." The distinction between "the mass" and "the public" is that "the mass" is characterized by interpersonal isolation. "The mass" is an aggregation of individuals who are separate, detached and anonymous, and are concerned of only their own needs. On the other hand, the characteristics of "the public" are that a group of people who are confronted by an issue, who are divided in the ideas as how to meet the issue and most importantly, who are engaged in discussion over the issue (Glynn et. al., 1999).

One important scholar in the recognition of the important role conversation plays in the formation of public opinion and political participation is Gabriel Tarde. Gabriel Tarde wrote about public opinion in the early decades of the twentieth century. In fact, Tarde defined public opinion by the relationship between newspaper and conversation. Tarde's model of public opinion is:

Media → Conversation → Opinion → Action

In fact, Tarde noted in his essay "Opinion and Conversation" that "conversation at all times, and the press, which at present is the principal source of conversation, are the major factors in opinion" (Clark, 1969). In addition to being a key factor for the formation of "the public" and public opinion, conversation is also the key factor in determining pass and active audience. Tarde noted that the press does not exhibit directive influence; rather it sets the agenda for conversation (Katz, 1992). In light of the heated argument on whether the audience is passive or active, Tarde would assume the audience as active. Conversation is the key to the distinction of active and passive. The press does not have direct effect on people, but rather the press provides the agenda for conversation (Katz, 1992). As a result, conversation and the press together comprise politics. According to Tarde, conversation would never have

gone above gossip without the press. And without conversation, newspapers would exercise no profound influence on the people (Katz, 1992).

In contrast to the Aristotelian conception of talk as speechmaking and persuasion, which is also purposeful and hierarchical, for Tarde, conversation in its modern form is egalitarian, freely accessible and purposeless (Katz, 1992). Conversation of modernity is citizens coming together to talk about daily issues relevant to their lives and their communities. In fact, public opinion is formed when the same conversation occupies an entire community or nation. Moreover, the dimensions of conversation may be seen as the social indicators of the well-being of a political system. In other words, the quality and quantity of political conversation among ordinary citizens becomes the index of how healthy is the political system. Tarde's model actually directs us to measure the dimensions and prevalence of conversation in a social system, such as conversation among or within different social strata, the geographical homogeneity of subjects discussed, the rate of change of subjects in a community, the length, rules and nature of conversation, the rapidity of speech, who talks with whom and the logic of the talks (Katz, 1992).

The third component of Tarde's model is opinion. For Tarde, opinion is not individual opinion but rather social opinion, which comprises ideas about current issues expressed in public. Individual opinion would not become Opinion unless it was expressed in the public. The transformation of individual opinion to social opinion is due to private conversations. Since opinion is actually social opinion, Tarde also believed that competing opinions quickly give way to dominant opinion and that dominant opinion would become stronger as more people would conform to it. Dominant view would lead to social actions which are actions taken by aggregates of individuals in expressing their preferences among different needs, among political leaders and their platforms as well as among different religious and aesthetic doctrines.

Political Talk by Youth

Given the significant role of political conversation in a democracy, scholars have investigated how youth engage themselves in political conversation and the consequences of their engagement. Conover and Searing (2000) note that the importance of political discussion is at its contribution to the essential conditions for a successful democracy,

conditions such as good representation, political legitimacy and a democratic community. Discussion contributes to good representation by helping citizens judge intelligently the talent, character and performance of candidates. Political talk promotes political legitimacy by helping citizens discover the nature of their disagreements and how a sufficient consensus can be reached for acceptable solutions. Finally, political discussion is the process through which a democratic community is built by enabling citizens to discover what they have in common, to understand one another and to create shared visions of a common good. Jennings and Niemi (1974) further note that for pre-adults, one of the most sensitive indicators of politicization is the frequency of political conversation. Adolescents might be required to read about, listen to and watch programs dealing with public affairs and politics. To some extent, these can be passive political activities. However, children or teenagers' talk about politics will be a significant political behavior given the fact that they will have lots of other matters to talk about with their family, teachers or friends.

In order to investigate the role of political discussion in the making of citizenship, Conover and Searing (2000) interviewed 100 students and their parents, teachers and community leaders as well as a random sample of

approximately 125 adult citizens in four local school communities. The four research sites were: a rural farm community in Minnesota; an urban, blue-collar community in Philadelphia; a suburban community in North Carolina; and a Hispanic community in San Antonio. Two measures for assessing the amount of political discussion were used. The first set of questions to assess the skills and motivation necessary for students to sustain regular political discussion is based on issues talked about. Questions on issues measure include:

"Please tell me how many times, if ever, you have had a discussion or serious conversation of five minutes or more about each topic during the last month. The first topic is economy, that is, things like interest rates, unemployment, and rising prices. In the last month how many times have you had a discussion or serious conversation about the economy? ... Not at all, once or twice, or often?"

The same question was repeated for thirteen more issues. The second set of questions on political discussion is to assess the settings of the discussion. The settings measure comprises questions that asked respondents to judge how frequently they had serious political discussions in various settings, such as home, church, social settings with strangers and social settings with friends, as well as with various people, such as parents, relatives and friends. Questions on settings measure include:

"People also discuss politics in different places and with different kinds of people. I am going to read you a list of places where people sometimes talk about public issues. For each one, please tell me how often you usually have discussions or serious conversations of more than five minutes about political issues like those just mentioned. The first is at home. Generally speaking, how often would you say you have discussions or serious conversations about political issues at home? ... Never, rarely, sometimes, or often?"

Conover and Searing (2000) find that relatively few students engage in a high level of political discussion. About one-third of the students report a moderate level of discussion. Most of the students, however, report talking infrequently or only occasionally about political issues. Moreover, discussion of issues is highest in the rural community and lowest in the immigrant community. As for the measurement of talk settings, the suburban community has the highest levels of political discussion, over 50 percent report high or moderate levels. It is followed by the rural community, the urban community and last the immigrant community. Conover and Searing (2000) also find that most students' understanding of their duties to discuss political issues publicly and stay informed is not significantly related to their levels of discussion. Students in the immigrant community are most likely to believe that staying informed and participating in public discussions are duties of citizenship, but they have the lowest levels of

discussion. On the other hand, students in the suburban community are least likely to see participating in political discussions as a duty of citizenship but are most likely to engage in political discussions. The exception to this pattern occurs in the rural community, where students with a sense of duty about these activities engage in more discussion.

Political conversation in the school setting in Conover and Searing's (2000) study is further measured by four different formats. Respondents were asked how often they had political conversations (1) at school in class; (2) at school, but not in class; (3) at after-school activities; and (4) with teachers. Results indicate that when students talk about politics at school, almost 80% of them hold their political discussions in class (44.5% reported "Often," and 35% reported "Sometimes.") Approximately 60% of the students report that they often or sometimes have political discussions with teachers. Political discussions with teachers are quite a substantial part of students' political discussion at school. Discussion outside of the classroom is less frequent and is particularly unlikely during after-school activities. 36.4% of the students talk about politics outside of class often or sometimes, and approximately 20% of

the students often or sometimes talk about politics during after-school activities.

Another key factor in determining the amount of political talk among students is civic engagement (Conover & Searing, 2000). Civic engagement creates social capital that can promote one of the practices of citizenship - political discussion. The more students are involved in their school and civic communities, the more likely they are to see discussing political issues and staying informed as activities of virtuous citizens. Civic engagement provides the setting and partners for political discussions to take place. Conover and Searing (2000) also find that civic engagement enhances students' senses of internal and external efficacy, which will be very likely to facilitate discussion in other settings. In fact, students are best socialized to citizenship in an environment rich in social capital. Different communities also differ in the relationship between civic engagement and political discussion. The connection is strongest in suburban and rural communities and weaker in urban and immigrant communities.

Jennings and Niemi (1974) find that while the majority of the high school seniors report that they discuss politics with their friends and parents, 80 and 86 percent,

respectively, however, about 60 percent hold such discussions only a few times a month or even less.

Conclusion

This chapter looked at the discursive turn in the theories of democracy, outlined the merits and pragmatic aspects of discursive democracy, compared and contrasted instrumental rationality and communicative rationality as well as a conceptual model proposed by Gabriel Tarde.

Given the important role political conversation plays in modern democracy, empirical studies on youth political discussion were examined. Research indicates that very few students engage in a high level of political discussion. Most of the students, in fact, rarely or occasionally talk about politics. Youth in suburban and rural communities are more likely to have political conversation, and youth in urban or immigrant communities are less likely to engage in political discussion. Moreover, most of the political discussion takes place in class and with teachers. Discussion outside of classroom and in after-school activities is unlikely. However, research also shows that civic engagement contributes to political discussion, especially in suburban and rural communities.

**CHAPTER7: CIVIC INTERVENTION PROGRAM THE MAKING OF
DISCURSIVE DEMOCRACY**

Conover and Searing (2000) conceive citizenship as a practice instead of as discrete acts of a single type of behavior, such as whether citizens voted in a particular election, watched a particular debate or gave money to a particular organization. To conceptualize citizen political behavior as a practice is to consider instead the "interrelationships among the multiple citizen behaviors that contribute to the practice as well as the patterns of sustained activity over time" (Conover & Searing, 2000, p. 93). In the case of students, they are citizens in training. As a result, they are developing a practice of citizenship. Research should focus on whether they have developed lifelong patterns of political discussion, whether they have stayed informed and whether they have developed tolerance that can sustain a full practice of citizenship. Thus, this study looks into the interrelationships among various youth political behaviors, such as exposure to Kids Voting, learning from the news, political talk and political participation. The annual Kids Voting program impact survey is used to assess the

impact of Kids Voting on overall practices of citizenship. It is important to find out the impact of Kids Voting on students' media use, political discussion and political participation as well as the interrelationships between these political socialization factors.

The relationships are further examined based on a model of discursive democracy, which is to conceptualize participatory democracy from a discursive perspective. The basic model is as follows:

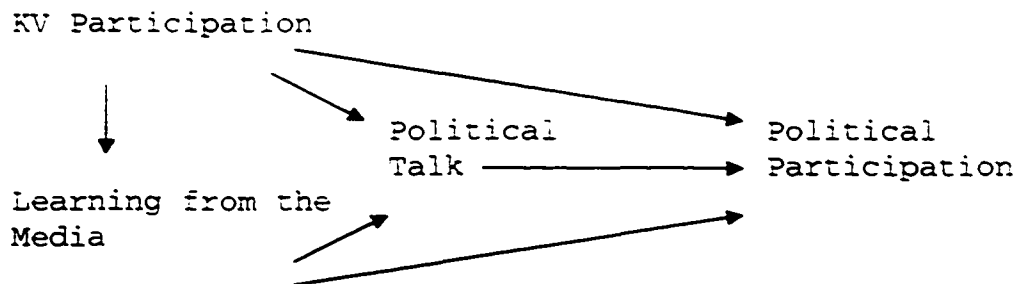


Figure 7.1: A Model of Discursive Democracy

The above model contains several hypotheses. First of all, participation in the Kids Voting curriculum increases students' learning from the media. Second, participation in the Kids Voting program increases students' conversation about politics. Third, learning from the media increases students' talk about politics. Fourth, participation in the Kids Voting curriculum increases students' political participation. Fifth, learning from the media also

directly increases political participation. Sixth, political talk by youth will facilitate political participation. The above six hypotheses are further examined in this chapter. Literature review will precede the discussion of each hypothesis.

Hypothesis One Literature Review:

Youth and Learning from the News

Studies of children's mass media usage patterns demonstrate a considerable amount of exposure to politically relevant information, especially in older age groups (Lyle and Hoffman, 1972; McLeod et al., 1972; Hawkins, Pingree & Roberts, 1975; Schramm et al., 1961).

Chaffee and Tims (1982) classified youth media use patterns into four levels, radio (level 1), television (level 2), newspaper (level 3) and magazine (level 4). According to Chaffee and Tims (1982), for adolescents, Level 2 demanded more cognitive processing than Level 1, and Level 2 required less cognitive efforts than Level 3, which needed less effort than Level 4. The reason for the above developmental progression is that newspaper and magazine reading involved higher level of attention and comprehension skills than listening to the radio or

watching television news. Chaffee and Tims (1982) find that age is an obvious explanatory variable. The results show that as adolescents mature, their media patterns change in a manner consistent with the developmental model: The proportions of individuals at the radio level and television level steadily decline, while the proportion of individuals at the newspaper and magazine levels steadily increase with age. In other words, the use of broadcast news media (television and radio) precedes the reading of print news media (newspapers and magazines). Chaffee and Tims (1982) find that reliance on radio is most common among those who have not adopted regular use of other media, while magazine use is characteristic of those who have used all the other media. The cumulative nature of news media use skills is not exclusive. It is not that broadcast media are abandoned once print media skills are acquired. Use of newspapers and magazines is usually associated with continued use of the broadcast media as well.

The radio-television-newspaper-magazine ordering also affects levels of knowledge gain by adolescents and their parents. For both adolescents and their parents, magazine users score better than newspaper users in all indices of political knowledge -- recall of names of presidential

candidates, knowledge of candidates' political parties, knowledge of political party symbols and knowledge of political party issue positions. In turn, newspaper users score higher than television users, and television users score better than radio users.

Findings on the relationship between patterns of adolescent media use and political knowledge are substantiated in political socialization research on immigrants. Chaffee, Nass and Yang (1990) find that U.S. television news exposure ranks alongside the newspaper as a positive predictor of U.S. political learning among Korean immigrants in the San Francisco Bay Area and is more important than other predictors, including years of schooling. Furthermore, among long-time U.S. residents and those with strong English language skills, the newspaper is the main predictor of political learning. But for those who have been in the U.S. for a shorter time and who lack English skills, television news is the stronger predictor of political learning. Thus, Chaffee et al. (1990) conclude that television news, in both the cases of adolescents and new immigrants, functioned as a "bridge" from easier comprehensible content (television news) to more detailed, elaborated political information (newspaper news). The bridging mechanism of television news in

political socialization derives from the conception that television news provides facts, such as the names of political leaders or their affiliation with parties and policies, and newspaper news provides greater depth and analysis of political issues for understanding of political processes (Clarke & Fredin, 1978).

Civic education and learning from the news

Jennings and Niemi (1974) note that the civics curriculum has a different impact upon political media usage among African-Americans and Caucasian-Americans. They find a consistent but weak association between taking civics courses and use of the media as an access to political information. Among African-American students, there is a consistently negative but somewhat stronger association between the civics curriculum and political media usage. The civics curriculum has a negative effect upon political media usage among African-American students at all levels of parental education. The negative correlations could be explained by substitution. A civics course increases a student's political interest but at the same time also acts as a substitute for political information gathering in the media.

Hypothesis One: Kids Voting Curriculum Increases

Information Students Received from the Media

One of the purposes of the annual Kids Voting program impact assessment survey is to evaluate how students utilize the news media for political information. Questions on student media usage are consistent every year. The reason is to be able to compare results across different years to assess the impact of Kids Voting program on student media usage. This section of the questionnaire contains six media usage questions. Students were asked how much information they received regarding the election from each of the five media outlets: newspaper, television, radio, magazine and the Internet. In 1998, answers were coded on a 5-point scale from "a great deal," "a lot," "some," "a little" to "none." Starting from 1999, answers to media usage questions were coded on a 4-point scale from "a lot," "some," "a little" to "none."

Students could choose between different news media outlets without being exclusive. Data from the 1998, 1999 and 2000 surveys are presented in Tables 7.1 through 7.5.

Table 7.1: Student News Media Usage - Newspapers (%)

Newspapers

5th and 6th Graders

	1998	1999	2000
A lot	31.5	24.2	32.7
Some	31.7	30.8	36.7
A little	18.4	19.0	14.3
None	18.4	.9	2.0
Missing			

7th - 12th Graders

	1998	1999	2000
A lot	29.6	22.5	34.9
Some	32.6	36.0	31.0
A little	17.4	22.5	18.1
None	20.2	17.8	13.5
Missing	.2	1.3	2.3

All Grades

	1998	1999	2000
A lot	30.3	23.0	34.0
Some	32.1	34.4	33.4
A little	17.8	21.4	16.6
None	19.7	20.1	13.8
Missing	.2	1.2	2.2

Table 7.2: Student News Media Usage - Television (%)

Television			
<u>5th and 6th Graders</u>			
	1998	1999	2000
A lot	55.3	52.6	61.9
Some	17.1	19.9	19.0
A little	16.1	12.8	6.1
None	11.1	14.7	8.8
Missing	.4		4.1
<u>7th - 12th Graders</u>			
	1998	1999	2000
A lot	46.5	38.1	63.3
Some	25.7	36.4	17.2
A little	13.0	13.6	10.7
None	14.2	11.0	6.5
Missing	.5	.8	2.3
<u>All Grades</u>			
	1998	1999	2000
A lot	48.7	42.6	62.7
Some	23.5	31.3	18.0
A little	13.9	13.3	8.8
None	13.4	12.2	7.5
Missing	.6	.6	3.0

According to Tables 7.1 and 7.2, the majority of the students received information from television about the election. An average of 75.6 percent of the students received a lot or some information about the election from television across all three years. The second most important media outlet for students' political information gathering is the newspaper. An average of 62.4 percent of

the students received a lot or some information from newspapers. For the year 2000, we also see a 20% increase in the information students received from the television and a 10% increase in the information students received from the newspaper. Tables 7.1 and 7.2 show that for a presidential election year, more students receive information from the media, and most of the information comes from the television. This confirms previous findings regarding television's "bridging" function as an information outlet. It is quite possible that students use more comprehensible information from the television as a starting point to be able to understand more detailed political information in the newspaper later in their adult life.

Tables 7.3 and 7.4 show the percentages of students who received information from radio or magazine. Across all three years, about 38.1 percent of the students received a lot or some political information from the radio and 20.2 percent of the students received a lot or some information from magazine.

Table 7.3: Student News Media Usage - Radio (%)

The Radio

5th and 6th Graders

	1998	1999	2000
A lot	13.0	17.1	20.4
Some	19.5	23.7	25.2
A little	23.4	24.2	27.9
None	43.4	33.6	23.1
Missing	.7	1.4	3.4

7th - 12th Graders

	1998	1999	2000
A lot	10.2	9.3	13.5
Some	19.8	28.4	31.6
A little	31.0	32.8	31.6
None	39.0	28.6	20.5
Missing	.1	.8	3.8

All Grades

	1998	1999	2000
A lot	10.8	11.7	16.3
Some	19.7	26.9	29.0
A little	29.1	30.2	30.1
None	40.1	30.2	21.5
Missing	.2	1.0	3.0

Table 7.4: Student News Media Usage - Magazine (%)

Magazines

5th and 6th Graders

	1998	1999	2000
A lot	8.7	6.6	11.6
Some	10.2	10.0	15.6
A little	16.3	20.9	14.3
None	64.2	61.1	53.1
Missing	.7	1.4	5.4

7th - 12th Graders

	1998	1999	2000
A lot	5.5	4.4	7.0
Some	11.6	14.8	16.3
A little	20.7	20.8	27.9
None	61.9	58.9	45.6
Missing	.4	1.1	3.3

All Graders

	1998	1999	2000
A lot	6.4	5.1	8.8
Some	11.0	13.3	16.0
A little	19.6	20.8	22.4
None	62.6	59.6	48.6
Missing	.4	1.2	4.1

Previous research (Chaffee & Tim, 1982) also indicates that as adolescents mature, more individuals will use newspaper and magazines than radio and television. In other words, we should see more 7th to 12th graders use newspaper and magazines than 5th and 6th graders, and more 5th and 6th graders use television and radio than 7th to 12th graders. This media use pattern is not found in this

study. According to Table 7.1 through 7.4, less 7th to 12th graders received information from the newspaper and magazine than 5th and 6th graders, and less 7th to 12th graders received information from the television and radio than 5th and 6th graders, except in 2000 when about 1.4 percent more 7th to 12th graders received information from the television. The developmental model of television and radio use followed by newspaper and magazine use is not sustained.

Table 7.5: Student News Media Usage - The Internet (%)

The Internet			
	<u>5th and 6th Graders</u>		
	1998	1999	2000
A lot	12.8	13.3	17.0
Some	6.1	7.6	19.0
A little	10.2	11.4	16.3
None	69.2	66.4	42.9
Missing	1.7	1.4	4.8
	<u>7th - 12th Graders</u>		
	1998	1999	2000
A lot	7.4	8.1	13.5
Some	8.4	14.4	23.7
A little	10.4	14.8	20.9
None	73.6	61.0	38.6
Missing	.2	1.7	3.3
	<u>All Graders</u>		
	1998	1999	2000
A lot	8.8	9.7	14.9
Some	7.7	12.3	21.8
A little	10.5	13.8	19.1
None	72.4	62.7	40.3
Missing	.6	1.7	3.9

Table 7.5 shows that across three years, an average of 25.1 percent of the students received a lot or some of the information from the Internet. Younger students tended to receive more information from the Internet than the older students. A comparison of information students receive from the Internet with information students receive from other media outlets shows that students receive more information from the Internet, a newer media outlet, than

from magazines, a more traditional information source. For the presidential election year, we also witness a substantial increase in the amount of information students receive from radio, magazine and the Internet.

Two patterns of media use are found in the three surveys. In the 1998 survey, the pattern of student media use is television, newspaper, radio, magazine, and the Internet. In the 1999 and 2000 surveys, the patterns of student media use are television, newspaper, radio, the Internet and magazine. Both of the two patterns show that the majority of the students still receive information from traditional media outlets, although the Internet has become an important media outlet for political information. The developmental model of adolescents moving from the electronic media to the print media is not found.

Kids Voting Curriculum and Learning from the Media

Did students learn more about politics from the news media by being exposed to the Kids Voting curriculum? Correlational analysis is performed on the amount of information students get from the media and Kids Voting participation. Results are presented in Table 7.6. The 1998 data indicate a significant, positive relationship

between KV participation and the amount of information students get from the media. According to the 1998 results, the more students participate in the program, the more information they receive from the media. This result is sustained in the 1999 survey and the 2000 survey. This finding contradicts previous findings by Jennings and Niemi (1974) showing that civic education courses function as a substitute for political information gathering by students. This study finds that the more the students participate in the program, the more information they receive from the media about the election.

The impact of Kids Voting curriculum is actually most obvious in the off years than in the presidential election year. As a result, the correlations in 1998 and 1999 are stronger than the correlation in 2000. The reason might be that there are fewer competing sources of information during subnational elections.

Table 7.6: Pearson Correlation Coefficients (r) between KV Curriculum and Information from the Media

		1998	1999	2000
		Information from the media		
KV parti	r	.249***	.232***	.163**
	n	963	608	333

* $\leq .05$, ** $\leq .01$, *** $\leq .001$

Table 7.7: Pearson Correlation Coefficients (r) between Information from the Media and Grade

1999 n=660		Paper	TV	Radio	Magazine	Internet
Grade		-.011	-.059	-.034	-.003	-.012
2000 n=340						
Grade		-.002	.050	-.022	-.039	.013

* $\leq .05$, ** $\leq .01$, *** $\leq .001$

Age as a factor to students' media usage is also examined (Table 7.8). Previous studies (Drew & Reeves, 1980) indicate that grade is not correlated to news media exposure. Correlation analysis in this study shows the same finding. Grade is not significantly correlated with how much information students receive from newspaper, television, radio, magazine or the Internet. Although most of the correlations are not statistically significant, a majority of the correlations between information from the media and grade are negative. It shows that the younger the students, the more likely they will expose themselves to the media for political information. This finding is sustained by previous studies.

Hypothesis Two Literature Review: Civic Education and Political Talk

A genuine democracy could not be obtained without citizens' participation in political discussions. In fact, democracy ultimately depends solely on civic sophistication of the people. The civic virtues that are crucial to the healthy maintenance of a democracy are the products of education, more specifically, democratic-civic education (Pangle & Pangle, 2000). Moreover, Benjamin Franklin, one of the Founders of the new republic, believes that training in public oratory and debate is an important aspect of school curriculum. Franklin urges students to read newspapers and journals of opinion on a regular basis and be incited to debate and to argue over both the issues and the modes of presentation of the day. Franklin states that "on historical occasions, questions of right and wrong, justice and injustice, will naturally arise, and may be put to youth, which they may debate in conversation and in writing" (Franklin, 1959). And one of the ways schooling can contribute to democratic practice is by reinforcing norms of proper discourse that are essential to democratic institutions and to the creation of students' political identities (March & Olsen, 2000). Gutmann (2000) also

holds schools accountable to teach skills and virtues necessary for students to deal with disagreements in a democracy. According to Gutmann (2000), there are three ways disagreements could be managed in a democratic system: procedurally, constitutionally, and deliberately. And all of the three ways are necessary, while none is sufficient, to deal with the wide range of disagreements that are unavoidable in a modern, diverse democracy. Schools are accountable to educate students with civic virtues such as encouraging tolerance and open-mindedness, addressing controversial issues, and developing an understanding of different cultures. All of these civic virtues are essential to procedural, constitutional, and deliberate ways of resolving disagreements in democracy.

Conover and Searing (2000) further note that at a minimum, school civic education should foster strong citizen identities, develop rich understandings of the role of citizens in a democracy, and sharpen the skills necessary for realizing that role. Moreover, central to that conception are political tolerance, mutual respect and the skills essential to deliberation. Conover and Searing (2000) urge more research to be done regarding how students develop citizen identities and understandings, political tolerance and the ability to deliberate as a useful basis

for educational reform. Conover and Searing (2000) further note the importance of political discussion in school setting. First, school allows students to develop the skills necessary for discussion in other different settings. The more students discuss at school, the more skillful they will become at it and will be more willing to discuss politics in the future in other settings. Second, political discussion among students allows for the transmission of information through active learning, and it enriches students' understanding of political issues and their roles as citizens in a democracy.

Conover and Searing's (2000) recent findings on the impact of civic courses on the amount of political discussion basically resonate findings in the previous studies of the 60s and the 70s. Taking formal civic courses is weakly correlated with discussions of issues, but it is not correlated with discussions in different social settings and with various social partners. However, taking informal civic courses, noncivic courses that take up citizenship issues, affects how much students talk about politics. The correlation is significant for both discussions of issues and discussions in different social settings. In other words, formal civic courses fails to motivate and inspire students to engage in sensible

political discussions. On the other hand, informal civic courses, such as English courses and History courses, have an impact on the amount of students' political discussion. What the findings indicate is that it is time to evaluate course content and the format of traditional civic curriculum.

Conover and Searing (2000) also find that there is a strong positive link between discussion at school and in other settings, such as at home or at church, across all four communities they studied. This finding suggests that school could play an important role in beginning the developmental process of an effective citizenship because discussion in one setting develops the skills and motivations for discussion in other settings. When students discuss political issues at school, they become better able and more likely to discuss politics at home or at places they worship. This argument is further supported by the findings that the connection between school discussion and general political discussion is stronger in the urban and immigrant communities, where adults in both communities have relatively low level of political discussion, and parents rarely discuss politics with their children. As a result, school has the potential to

compensate other institutions in socializing students to citizenship.

Earlier empirical studies on the relationship between students taking civic courses and the frequency of their political discussions are promising. Jennings and Niemi (1974) use data from the national survey of American high school seniors conducted by the Survey Research Center of the University of Michigan in 1965 and find that although the size of the correlations in the relationship between civic course taking and frequency of political discussion is small, the direction of the results shows that the more civic courses the student have, the more likely he or she is to have more political discourse. More strikingly, when students from lower-status families take more civic courses, their political interest and frequency of political discussion with peers increases (Jennings & Niemi, 1974). In other words, it is found that the impact of civic courses on how often students discuss public affairs and politics with their friends outside class significantly increases among students from less-educated families. Those studies vindicate that civic courses have the potential to narrow the gap in political knowledge and frequency of political discussion between students from less-educated families and students from higher-educated

families. For example, Jennings and Niemi (1974) find that as African-American students from less-educated families take more civics courses, their political interest and frequency of political discussion with peers increase. Since less-educated parents ordinarily show lower states of politicization, information provided by civics courses is nonredundant and spurs an upsurge in student politicization.

Since previous studies find that the impact of civic education is quite limited to students from less-educated families, scholars began to be concerned about the validity of using survey research to measure the impact of school civic curriculum. Gutmann (1987) states that an increase in students' ability to reason collectively and critically about politics due to school civic curriculum is virtually quite difficult to measure by survey research. However, this study on the impact of Kids Voting program is another attempt to uncover the influence school civic curriculum might have upon students.

Hypothesis Two: Kids Voting Curriculum Increases Student Political Discussion

One important indicator of students' interest in politics is how much they talk about the election. Political talk survey questions are administered to students every year, however, the questions are also different every year.

In the 1998 survey, students were asked whether they had asked questions or initiated discussions about the election with their parents or legal guardians. The 1999 survey asked students about the topics of their political discussion. Students were asked how often they talked about what the city, state or national government is doing, how the economy is doing, crime and violence in society, what is going on in schools or education, religion and religious beliefs as well as what is happening in foreign countries. Answers were coded on a 4-point scale with "don't know" as missing values.

The 2000 survey on student political discussion focuses on whether students held their political conversations with family members or friends. Students were also asked whether they engaged in political persuasive activities, such as whether they talked with

people whose ideas were different from theirs or whether they talked anyone into being for a candidate they liked.

In 1998, 45.9 percent of the students asked questions or initiated discussions about the election, but there were 50.2 percent of the students did not. Table 7.9 also shows that younger students were more likely to ask questions or initiate discussions about the election than older students. According to Table 7.9, more 5th and 6th graders asked questions or initiated discussion about the election than older students. Moreover, there is a negative, low correlation between grade and political discussion in 1998 ($r = -.092$, $p = .000$, $n = 1685$). Kids Voting participation motivates more political discussion from younger students than from older students.

Table 7.8: 1998 Student Political Discussions

Asked questions or initiated discussions about the election

	Grade 5 & 6	Grade 7 - 12	All Grades
Yes	52.1	44.2	45.9
No	43.2	52.4	50.2
Don't know/Missing	4.8	3.4	3.9

Does the Kids Voting curriculum motivate students to talk more about politics and elections? Results of correlational analysis in Table 7.9 show that the more the

students participate in the Kids Voting program, the more likely they will talk about the election.

Table 7.9: Pearson Correlation Coefficients (r) between Exposure to KV Curriculum and Political Discussions - 1998

	Grade 5 & 6	Grade 7 - 12	All Grades
	Political Discussions		
KV	.248***	.221***	.238***
n =	267	662	948

* $\leq .05$, ** $\leq .01$, *** $\leq .001$

The 1999 survey results regarding student political discussion are presented in Table 7.10. The focus of the 1999 survey on political discussion is to examine the subjects of their discussion in order to further understand the process of youth political socialization. Table 7.10 presents results from questions pertaining to the subject content of students' political discussion. For all grades, crime is the most talked about topic among students. The second most talked about subject is education, which is followed by religion. Older students talk about economy more than younger students, while younger students talk more about foreign affairs than older students. The least talked about subject by students is government. Across all subjects, an average of 44.85 percent of the 5th and 6th

graders talked about politics often or sometimes and 49.13 percent of the 7th through 12th graders talked about politics often or sometimes. Table 7.10 shows that older students talked about politics more than younger students do.

Table 7.10: 1999 Student Political Discussion (%)

<u>5th and 6th Graders</u>							
	Gov't	Econ.	Edu	Crime	Relig.	Foreign Affairs	Avg.
Often or Sometimes	33.7	33.6	58.3	63.0	44.5	36.0	44.85
Seldom or Never	54.0	53.1	33.2	31.8	47.4	56.4	45.98
Don't know	11.4	12.8	7.6	5.2	8.1	7.1	
<u>7th - 12th Graders</u>							
	Gov't	Econ.	Edu	Crime	Relig.	Foreign Affairs	Avg.
Often or Sometimes	35.2	41.1	58.9	76.7	44.1	38.8	49.13
Seldom or Never	60.6	54.5	34.1	21.2	52.7	54.7	46.3
Don't know	4.2	4.2	6.6	2.1	3.0	6.4	

The impact of the Kids Voting curriculum on political discussion is presented in Table 7.11. Similar to the 1998

survey results, the Kids Voting curriculum has greater impact on younger students than on older students. For the 5th and 6th graders, except for education, the Kids Voting curriculum motivates them to talk more about government, economy, foreign affairs, religion and crime. Although Table 7.11 shows that government, economy and foreign affairs are among the least talked about subjects among students, the Kids Voting curriculum actually increased students' discussion on government, economy and foreign affairs among 5th and 6th graders. The Kids Voting program also increased students' conversation about education and government among 7th through 12th graders. In other words, if the Kids Voting program were not introduced, even fewer students would talk about government, economy and foreign affairs. In fact, the subject that the Kids Voting curriculum has the greatest impact on is government, which has the highest correlation with KV participation among students of all grades.

**Table 7.11: Pearson Correlation Coefficients (r)
between Exposure to KV Curriculum and Political Discussions
- 1999**

		<u>5th and 6th Graders</u>					
		Gov't	Economy	Edu	Crime	Religion	Foreign Affairs
KV	r	.258**	.231**	.089	.152*	.186*	.210**
	n	171	166	175	182	178	179
		<u>7th - 12th Graders</u>					
KV	r	.174***	.076	.178***	.055	.065	.093
	n	414	414	401	424	419	403
		<u>Grade 5 - Grade 12</u>					
KV	r	.187***	.099*	.137**	.049	.119**	.124**
	n	585	580	576	606	597	582

***≤.05, **≤.01, ***≤.001**

The impact of KV curriculum on student political discussions is further shown in Table 7.12, which outlines the order of KV curriculum impact on various political discussion subjects. According to Table 7.12, government and foreign affairs move to the top of the list from the bottom of the list on subjects students talk about the most. In other words, the two subjects that KV curriculum has the most impact on are government and foreign affairs, which students normally talk about the least.

Table 7.12: The Order of KV Curriculum Impact on Political Discussion Subjects

In the Order of the Magnitude of KV Impact:

<u>Grade 5 & 6</u>	<u>Grade 7 - 12</u>	<u>Grade 5 - 12</u>
Government	Education	Government
Economy	Government	Education
Foreign Affairs		Foreign
Affairs		
Religion		Religion
Crime		Economy

In the Order of Most Talked About Subject by Students to the Least:

<u>Grade 5 & 6</u>	<u>Grade 7 - 12</u>	<u>Grade 5 - 12</u>
Crime	Crime	Crime
Education	Education	Education
Religion	Religion	Religion
Foreign Affairs	Economy	Economy
Economy	Foreign Affairs	Foreign
Affairs		
Government	Government	Government

The year 2000 survey also examined student political conversation. Results are presented in Table 7.13 through Table 7.18. Political conversation is assessed from the aspects of with whom students have the conversation with, whether students initiate the conversation, political tolerance and political persuasion. For the first aspect, more than 50 percent of the 5th and 6th graders and about 40 percent of the 7th to 12th graders had political conversation at home with parents or others in the family often or sometimes. However, fewer students held political

conversation with friends. A little more than 30 percent of the students had political talk with their friends often or sometimes. Most of the students, close to 60 percent, seldom or never had political conversation with their friends.

Table 7.13: 2000 Student Political Discussions

With Parents or Others in the Family

	Grade 5 & 6	Grade 7 - 12	All Grades
Often or Sometimes	51	38.6	53.6
Seldom or Never	37.4	55.3	38.2
Don't know/Missing	11.6	6.1	8.3

With Friends

	Grade 5 & 6	Grade 7 - 12	All Grades
Often or Sometimes	33.3	32.1	32.6
Seldom or Never	58.5	58.6	58.6
Don't know/Missing	8.1	9.3	8.8

The Kids Voting curriculum again contributes to how much students talk about politics, especially for the 5th and 6th graders. According to Table 7.14, the Kids Voting program is a significant predictor for student political discussion at home with parents or others in the family. Similar to the results from the previous two surveys,

younger students were influenced more by the program than the older students.

The Kids Voting curriculum also contributes to political discussion among students. According to Table 7.14, participation in the program increases political conversation among the 5th and 6th graders, but not among the older students.

Table 7.14: Pearson Correlation Coefficients (r) between Exposure to KV Curriculum and Political Discussions - 2000

With Parents or Others in the Family				
		Grade 5 & 6	Grade 7 - 12	All Grades
KV	r	.234**	.153*	.172**
	n	127	197	324
With Friends				
		Grade 5 & 6	Grade 7 - 12	All Grades
KV	r	.196*	.110	.129*
	n	132	190	322

* $\leq .05$, ** $\leq .01$, *** $\leq .001$

Table 7.15: 2000 Student Political Tolerance

Talked with People Whose Ideas or Candidate Preferences Were Different			
	Grade 5 & 6	Grade 7 - 12	All Grades
Often or Sometimes	48.3	51.1	50
Seldom or Never	36.7	35.3	35.9
Don't know/Missing	15.0	13.5	14.1

The second aspect of the survey on student political discussion is about political tolerance. Table 7.15 shows that the majority of the students, about 48 percent of the 5th and 6th graders and 51 percent of the 7th to 12th graders, talked often or sometimes with people whose ideas and candidate preferences are different from theirs. Moreover, student political tolerance correlates positively with participation in the program. Again, the effect is more prominent among the younger students. The more the students participate in the program and like the program, the more tolerant they will be when talking to people whose ideas or candidate preferences are different.

Table 7.16: Pearson Correlation Coefficients (r) between Exposure to KV Curriculum and Political Tolerance - 2000

		Talked with People Whose Ideas or Candidate Preferences Were Different		
		Grade 5 & 6	Grade 7 - 12	All Grades
KV	r	.231**	.174*	.176**
	n	123	181	304

* $\leq .05$, ** $\leq .01$, *** $\leq .001$

Table 7.17: 2000 Student Political Persuasion

Talked Anyone into Being for a Candidate You Liked

	Grade 5 & 6	Grade 7 - 12	All Grades
Yes	39.5	35.8	37.3
No	42.2	46.5	44.8
Don't know/Missing	18.3	17.7	18.0

The third aspect of the 2000 political discussion survey is about political persuasion. Close to 40 percent of the 5th and 6th graders and 36 percent of the 7th to 12th graders talked somebody into being for a candidate they like. Although more younger students reported behavior of political persuasion, the Kids Voting curriculum only positively correlates with activities of political persuasion by older students (see Table 7.18). For the 7th to 12th graders, exposure to the program contributes to talking people into being for a candidate they like. This effect, however, is not found among younger students. Kids Voting program motivates older students to engage in political persuasion but does not motivate younger students to engage in politically persuasive behavior.

**Table 7.18: Pearson Correlation Coefficients (r)
between Exposure to KV Curriculum and Political Persuasion
- 2000**

Talked Anyone into Being for a Candidate You Liked

		Grade 5 & 6	Grade 7 - 12	All Grades
KV	r	.176	.235**	.220***
	n	118	172	290

*** $\leq .05$, ** $\leq .01$, *** $\leq .001$**

Previous research shows that taking civic courses is weakly correlated with discussions of issues and is not correlated with political discussion with various social partners (Conover & Searing, 2000). However, previous research also indicates that the more civic courses the student has, the more likely he or she is to have more political discussion (Langton & Jennings, 1969). Results from the three surveys are more consistent with Langton and Jennings' findings. Exposure to civic curriculum contributes to student political discussion. Moreover, civic curriculum also motivates students to talk more about subjects they otherwise would not talk about, such as government and foreign affairs.

Hypothesis Three Literature Review: Youth, News Media and Interpersonal Communication

Given the independent role the media play in the political socialization process of the young and the importance of political discussion among ordinary citizens to the maintenance a discursive democracy, whether attention to the news media could facilitate political discussion becomes a key question to be answered in order to better understand the relationship between news media and youth political socialization. To tangle the relationship, scholars have conceptualized interpersonal political discussion among the young as an independent variable (Jackson-Beeck, 1979) or a dependent variable (Garramone & Atkin, 1986; Atkin & Gantz, 1978).

Political Talk as an Independent Variable. Jackson-Beeck (1979) uses political conversation, newspaper exposure and television exposure as independent variables to predict levels of political knowledge and political interest among the young. Jackson-Beeck (1979) finds that political discussion is negatively associated with political knowledge and is not a significant predictor of political interest. Moreover, children from families with

poorer educational backgrounds are much less likely to be informed via interpersonal political discussion. The main source of information for children with less educational background is newspaper. Newspaper reading serves a compensatory function to foster political knowledge. On the other hand, children from families with higher educational backgrounds attune to interpersonal communication as a positive vehicle for stimulating political interest and political knowledge. To sum up, children from disadvantaged families rely on newspaper for their political knowledge, while children from more advantaged families rely more on political conversation.

Atkin (1972) finds that high school students in an experimental condition where they anticipate discussing national current events are more heavily exposed to television news than students who do not expect such discussions. In fact, study has shown that interpersonal discussion of the news is an important predictor of television news exposure (Atkin, 1978). Chaffee and Tims (1982) find that the more parents talk about politics with their adolescents, the higher levels of news media use by adolescents.

Political Talk as a Dependent Variable. Garramone (1983) finds that network television news exposure is strongly related to political discussion. Moreover, student scholarship and political interest are both highly correlated with political conversation. Males are more likely to talk about politics than females, and students from higher socioeconomic backgrounds are more likely to hold political conversation.

Garramone and Atkin (1986) find that television news viewing is strongly related to interpersonal discussion of politics, with newspaper news reading and radio news listening also significant predictors. Students with a strong scholarly orientation are significantly more likely to engage in interpersonal discussion regarding politics, although other studies do not generate the same result (Atkin & Gantz, 1978).

Schramm et al. (1961) discover that 6th-graders in a town that is served by television tend to discuss the news twice as often as those in a town that have no television reception. Moreover, according to Roberts et al. (1975), 6th and 10th-graders highly exposed to media public affairs content are more likely to participate in family political discussion. How children are motivated to be exposed to the news media also affects political conversation.

Children who are motivated to watch the news because they think the news is fun and exciting are more likely to talk about politics with parents, teachers and peers than children who are motivated because parents are watching or because teachers tell them to watch.

Atkin and Gantz (1978) study elementary school students in 1973 and in 1974 for the impact of national news broadcast and Saturday news broadcast on students' political discussion with peers and parents. Atkin and Gantz (1978) find that grade in school is the strongest predictor of political discussion with peers and parents. As children get older, they are particularly likely to increase discussions with peers, while conversations with parents are less strongly related to grade. For national news, a stronger correlation with discussion is found among younger children than among the older children. For Saturday news broadcast, however, the relationship is stronger for older than for younger children. By cross-lagged correlation analyses between the 1973 data and the 1974 data, Atkin and Gantz (1978) do not identify a causal relationship between news exposure and political conversation. Atkin and Gantz (1978) state that there is no evidence to show that the amount of news viewing serves to increase news discussion, although those who watch news

do talk more about politics. However, the act of news exposure is not the cause of political conversation. Political discussion appears to be a cause of exposure rather than a consequence. Talking about the news with other people mildly stimulates news viewing but is not directly stimulated by exposure to news broadcast.

Chaffee and Tims (1982) survey 718 adolescents aged ten to seventeen and their parents and find that more sophisticated news media users, who consume both broadcast news media and print news media, demonstrate much higher levels of interest in conversations about politics than unsophisticated news users, who consume mainly broadcast news. When each respondent is asked: "Is politics something you like to talk about, or is it just something other people bring up?" Sophisticated news media users are much more likely to initiate political conversation. Only 12 percent of the unsophisticated news users said "yes," that they like to initiate political conversation, but for sophisticated news users the figure is 64 percent. Moreover, sophisticated adolescents news users are also more motivated in the consumption of political news. When respondents were asked: "Is television news something you like to watch , or is it something you watch because other people have it on?" 14 percent of the unsophisticated news

users said "yes," they like to watch it, but 67 percent of the sophisticated news users gave this response.

Discussion with parents is found to correlate with national television news exposure, local news exposure, newspaper exposure, radio news exposure, liking the news and seeking more information after watching the news (Drew & Reeves, 1980).

Elihu Katz and other scholars, such as Joohan Kim and Robert O. Wyatt, further examine Tarde's public opinion model and find that news media use is closely associated with the frequency of political conversation both at general and issue-specific levels. Moreover, willingness to argue with those who have different opinions is influenced by news media use and political talk. Furthermore, news media use and political conversation are closely associated also with participatory activities, such as campaign activities (Kim, Wyatt and Katz, 1999).

With the previous research results on the relationship between news media use and political discussion, this study intends to use political discussion as both an independent variable and a dependent variable. Hypothesis Three examines political conversation as a dependent variable, and news media use is the independent variable. In Hypothesis Six, political talk is analyzed as an

independent variable and political participation as a dependent variable.

Hypothesis Three: News Media Usage Increases Student Political Discussion

Table 7.19: Pearson Correlation Coefficients (r) between Information from the Media and Political Discussions - 1998

	Grade 5 & 6	Grade 7 - 12	All Grades
	Political Discussions		
Info. from the Media	.240***	.288***	.274***
N	425	1231	1695

*** $\leq .05$, ** $\leq .01$, *** $\leq .001$**

According to Table 7.19, in the 1998 survey, students who receive more information from the media are also more likely to talk about the election. Information from the media has a higher correlation with political discussion among older students than among younger students. In other words, in terms of political discussion, civic intervention course such as Kids Voting affects younger students more than older students (see Hypothesis Two discussion). The news media in turn affects the older students more than the younger students. For younger students, Kids Voting participation is a slightly stronger predictor of political discussion than information received from the media, and

for older students, the amount of information received from the media is a slightly stronger predictor for political discussion than the civic intervention program.

Results from the 1999 survey show that the media as an agent of political socialization motivate more political conversation than KV participation (see Table 7.20 and Table 7.11) because the correlations are stronger between information from the media and political discussion than between exposure to the KV curriculum and political discussion. The influence is also more prominent among younger students than among older students, although in the 1998 survey, older students were more likely to be motivated by the media to talk about politics than younger students. For 5th and 6th graders, information students received from the media significantly correlates with all the discussion subjects, among which, government, economy, foreign affairs and crime have the highest correlations. For the older students, information from the media significantly correlates with all of the discussion topics except for religion. In fact, the media increase students' conversations on government, economy and foreign affairs quite substantially and also moderately increase students' talk about crime and education. For all the students surveyed, government, economy and foreign affairs are the

subjects that we saw the greatest impact of the media on students' political discussion.

Table 7.20: Pearson Correlation Coefficients (r) between Information from the Media and Political Discussions - 1999

<u>5th and 6th Graders</u>						
	Gov't	Economy	Edu	Crime	Religion	Foreign Affairs
Info r	.454***	.461***	.196**	.355***	.212**	.410***
n	176	175	186	192	186	187
<u>7th - 12th Graders</u>						
Info r	.343***	.322***	.124*	.192***	.060	.265***
n	438	437	428	449	444	428
<u>Grade 5 - Grade 12</u>						
Info r	.380***	.368***	.149***	.249***	.113**	.317***
n	614	612	614	641	630	615

* $\leq .05$, ** $\leq .01$, *** $\leq .001$

Table 7.21: Pearson Correlation Coefficients (r) between Information from the Media and Political Discussions - 2000

With Parents or Others in the Family

	Grade 5 & 6	Grade 7 - 12	All Grades
Info r	.323***	.433***	.385***
n	121	197	318

With Friends

	Grade 5 & 6	Grade 7 - 12	All Grades
Info r	.295**	.212**	.251***
n	126	189	315

* $\leq .05$, ** $\leq .01$, *** $\leq .001$

According to Table 7.21, the 2000 survey on the relationship between the news media and political conversation shows that information from the media is a strong indicator of whether students hold political discussion at home with parents or others in the family. The effect is more prominent among older students than among younger students. Information from the media is also a strong predictor for political discussion among friends, although not as strong a predictor as for family political discussion. Information from the media significantly correlates with whether students will have political discussion with their friends. Interestingly, the effect of the news media to stimulate political discussion among friends is stronger among the younger students than among the older students. In sum, after students receive information from the media, older students are more likely to hold political discussion at home than younger students, and younger students are more likely than older students to hold political discussion with friends.

**Table 7.22: Pearson Correlation Coefficients (r)
between Information from the Media and Political Tolerance
- 2000**

**Talked with People Whose Ideas or Candidate Preferences
Were Different**

	Grade 5 & 6	Grade 7 - 12	All Grades
Info r	.351***	.346***	.347***
n	116	181	297

* $\leq .05$, ** $\leq .01$, *** $\leq .001$

The contribution of information from the media to political tolerance among students is significant, according to Table 7.22. Information from the media is significantly and positively correlated with whether students will talk with people whose ideas or candidate preferences are different from theirs. The more information students received from the media, the more likely they will talk to people whose opinions are different.

**Table 7.23: Pearson Correlation Coefficients (r)
between Information from the Media and Political Persuasion
- 2000**

Talked Anyone into Being for a Candidate You Liked

	Grade 5 & 6	Grade 7 - 12	All Grades
Info r	.211*	.243***	.229***
n	114	171	285

* $\leq .05$, ** $\leq .01$, *** $\leq .001$

According to Table 7.23, information from the media significantly contributed to students' persuasive political behavior. The more information the students receive from the media, the more likely they will talk somebody into being for a candidate they like. This effect is more prominent among the older students than among the younger students. Information from the media is more likely to prompt older students than younger students into politically persuasive behavior.

Previous research shows that political talk is significantly correlated with media exposure (Atkin, 1972; Garramone, 1983; Schramm, 1961; Robert et al., 1975). Moreover, political talk is conceptualized as either an independent variable or a dependent variable. Data from the three surveys also show that information from the media significantly correlates with political conversation. Furthermore, information from the media also significantly correlates with other political talk activities, such as political tolerance and political persuasion.

Past research also shows that grade is an important factor in predicting political conversation. According to Atkin and Gantz (1978), older students are more likely to hold political discussion with peers, while political discussion is less likely to relate to grade. Grade is

also found to be an important factor in the relationship between media exposure and political conversation. Data from the 2000 survey show that the media motivate more older students to talk about politics at home while more younger students are motivated to talk about politics with their peers, although overall the media generate more political talk at home than among peers.

The relationship between patterns of media use and political conversation is examined by Garramone and Atkin (1986) and Chaffee and Tim (1982). Table 7.24 shows that information from the newspaper is most significantly correlated with frequency of political talk among students, followed by information from the magazine and the radio in the 1999 survey, and by television and the Internet in the 2000 survey.

Table 7.24: Pearson Correlation Coefficients (r) between Patterns of Media Use and Political Talk

1999 n=520					
	Paper	TV	Radio	Magazine	Internet
Talk Frequency	.327***	.226***	.291***	.298***	.200***
2000 n=302					
Talk Frequency	.294***	.282***	.210***	.203***	.261***

* $\leq .05$, ** $\leq .01$, *** $\leq .001$

Hypothesis Four Literature Review: Kids Voting Curriculum and Political Participation

The essence of democracy is about governance by the people. But who participates and how do citizens participate in the political decision making process become the question of the nature of democracy in a society. According to Verba and Nie (1987), political participation refers to "those activities by private citizens that are more or less directly aimed at influencing the selection of governmental personnel and/or the actions they take" (p. 2). In other words, political participation is actions by citizens aiming at influencing governmental decisions. It emphasizes a flow of influence upward from the public to the government. It involves a process by which the national interests are created rather than just supported (Verba & Nie, 1987).

Verba and Nie (1987) specify three reasons why participation is important in a democracy. First of all, participation communicates citizens' desires and needs to the government. Second, participation is itself a prime source of satisfaction - satisfaction with the government and one's role as a citizen. Third, participation can be viewed as an educational device through which civic virtues

can be learned. The importance of participation in a democracy is further illustrated by the four modes of political participation stated by Verba and Nie (1987).

Verba and Nie (1987) use factor analysis on thirteen political participation variables⁴ and conclude that there are mainly four ways citizens usually participate in politics. The first two types of action are electoral activities: voting and campaign activity. By voting, it means that citizens voted in the state or local elections. As for campaign activities they refer to other activities that take place during elections, such as working for a party or candidate, attending meetings, contributing money and trying to convince others how they should vote. There are also nonelectoral activities through which citizens could participate in politics: citizen-initiated contacts and cooperative activity. Citizen-initiated contacts occur when an individual takes the initiative to contact a government official. Cooperative activities involve informal groups or formal organizations taking initiatives to deal with political or social problems. In contrast to

⁴ The thirteen participation variables are: persuade others how to vote; actively work for party or candidate; attend political meeting or rally; contribute money to party or candidate; membership in political clubs; voted in 1964 presidential election; voted in 1960 presidential election; frequency of voting in local elections; work with others on local problem; form a group to work on local problems; active membership in community problem-solving organizations; contact local officials; and contact state and national officials.

electoral activities such as voting and helping out in political campaigns, citizens have more control over timing and agenda to contact government officials about as well as the outcome in nonelectoral activities.

Results from past studies on the impact of civic education on political participation are mixed. Jennings and Niemi (1974) research the impact of civic courses on two dimensions of citizenship behavior: loyalty and political participation. They find that as African-American students take more civic courses, more loyalty and less participation are cultivated. Civic curriculum appears to inculcate in African-American students the role expectation that a good citizen is above all a loyal citizen rather than an active one. This effect is more obvious among African-American students whose parents have some secondary school or college education. Their loyal orientation increases as they take more civic courses. African-American students from less-educated families increase their participation orientation much like Caucasian-Americans.

Hypothesis Four: Kids Voting Curriculum Increases Student Political Participation

In both the 1999 and 2000 surveys, political participation is assessed by 7 questions pertaining to the extent of students' political activities. Students were asked whether they have ever written a letter to the news media, called in to a talk show, contacted a candidate for public office or an elected official, attended a meeting on public affairs, spoken out at a meeting on public affairs, taken part in a public demonstration or march or worked in a political campaign. Answers to the above questions were coded as either "yes" or "no." "Don't remember" was coded as missing values.

The most popular modes of political participation for students from 5th to 12th grade in the 1999 survey were calling in to a radio or television talk show, attending a public meeting on public affairs, or writing a letter to a newspaper, magazine or television news program. In the 2000 survey, students mostly participated in politics through calling in to a radio or television talk show, taking part in a public demonstration or march, or attending a public meeting on public affairs. For both 1999 and 2000, calling in to a radio or television talk

show was the most popular political activity among students.

Table 7.25: Student Political Participation (%)

	1999	2000
Written a letter to a newspaper, magazine or television news program	30.6	20.7
Called in to a radio or television talk show	52.6	40.9
Contacted a candidate for public office or an elected official	24.9	13.3
Attended a public meeting on public affairs	30.7	23.2
Spoken out at a public meeting for public affairs	12.0	8.3
Taken part in a public demonstration or march	24.7	23.8
Worked in a political campaign	14.2	13.8

The impact of the Kids Voting curriculum on student political participation varies according to different types of political engagement, according to Table 7.26. In 1999, the Kids Voting curriculum is significantly correlated with 4 out of the 7 modes of political participation, although the correlations are moderate. The Kids Voting curriculum

in 1999 significantly and moderately contributes to political activities such as contacting a candidate for public office or an elected official, attending a public meeting on public affairs, speaking out at public meetings, taking part in a public demonstration or march or working in a political campaign. Composite measure of student political participation, which is the sum of all participation variables, is also significantly correlated with participation in the Kids Voting curriculum. Given calling in to a radio or television is the most popular mode of political participation among students, exposure to the KV curriculum does not contribute to this particular political activity.

In the 2000 survey, the Kids Voting program correlates with 2 out of the 7 modes of political participation, attending public meetings and speaking out at public meetings. The political participation activities that are significantly correlated with the Kids Voting program for both years include attending public meetings and speaking out at public meetings. It shows that the Kids Voting curriculum does motivate students to be more politically involved through actively attending public meetings and speaking out at those meetings. The composite measure of

political participation in the 2000 survey also significantly correlates with the program.

Table 7.26: Pearson Correlation Coefficients (r) between Exposure to KV Curriculum and Student Political Participation

	1999 n=431	2000 n=242
Write a letter to the news media	.060	.113
Call in radio/TV talk show	.027	.111
Contact a candidate for public office	.121*	.107
Attend public meetings	.147**	.141*
Speak out at public meetings	.116*	.143*
Participate in public demonstration or march	.136**	.064
Work in a political Campaign	.150**	.017
Composite measure of political participation	.186***	.169**

* $\leq .05$, ** $\leq .01$, *** $\leq .001$

Hypothesis Five Literature Review: Learning from the News and Political Participation

Previous studies have shown that exposure to the news media contributes to political participation. For example, listening to political talk radio stimulates political participation and attention to political events (Hofstetter, 1998). Print news exposure is more strongly related to participation than to political discussion, whereas broadcast news exposure is more closely related to interpersonal discussion (Garramone & Atkin, 1986).

News media exposure of youth also contributes to their political participation. Coway, Wyckoff, Feldbaum & Ahern (1981) research 760 5th and 6th grade students and find that children's news media use and level of knowledge about American political processes are consistently more important in determining level of political participation, support for the political parties and support for the electoral process than are instructional methods of civic curricula, parental news media use and the structural variables of grade and gender. Children's news media use, alone and in conjunction with knowledge of the American political process, is a significant determinant of children's political attitudes and patterns of political

participation. Garramone and Atkin (1986) find that younger students were more likely to anticipate participation than were older students.

Although there are studies confirm the positive relationship between news media exposure and political participation, there are also studies which find the opposite. Chaffee, Ward and Tipton (1970) find that public affairs news exposure during the 1968 presidential campaign does not affect overt behavior such as political activity. The influence is significant as far as political knowledge is concerned, but its influence does not extend to overt behavior such as campaign activity. In other words, there is solid evidence of information effects, but there is little evidence of effects on overt political behavior.

Hypothesis Five: Learning from the News Increases Student Political Participation

News media use by youth significantly contributes to every mode of political participation. According to Table 7.30, the 1999 survey shows that information received from the news media significantly correlate with all 7 modes of political participation. The composite measure of

political participation also strongly correlates with how much students learn from the news media.

Results from the year 2000 survey show similar findings as in the 1999 survey. Information received from the news media significantly correlate with all 7 modes of political participation. The particular mode of political participation that is most strongly correlated with information from the media for both years is speaking out at public meetings. It shows that when students learn from the media, the most likely political activity that they will engage in is speaking out at meetings. The composite measure of political participation in the 2000 survey also strongly correlate with how much youth learn from the news media. Results from both years' survey clearly show that the more students learn from the news media, the more likely they will be politically active.

Previous research (Garramone & Atkin, 1986) examines the relationship between patterns of media use and political participation. It is found that print media use is more strongly related to participation than electronic media use. Data from the 1999 and 2000 survey further confirm the previous finding. Table 7.29 shows that information from the television fails to predict political participation in both years. Moreover, information from

the newspaper, magazine and the Internet is found to significantly correlate with political participation. In fact, in 2000, information from the Internet is the most significant predictor of political participation.

Table 7.27: Pearson Correlation Coefficients (r) between Information from the Media and Student Political Participation

	1999 n=456	2000 n=240
Write a letter to the news media	.205***	.197**
Call in radio TV talk show	.094*	.192**
Contact a candidate for public office	.106*	.177***
Attend public meetings	.184***	.200**
Speak out at public meetings	.226***	.234***
Participate in public demonstration or march	.103*	.245***
Work in a political Campaign	.112*	.160*
Composite measure of political participation	.259***	.338***

* $\leq .05$, ** $\leq .01$, *** $\leq .001$

Table 7.28: Pearson Correlation Coefficients (r) between Patterns of Media Use and Political Participation

1999 n=456	Paper	TV	Radio	Magazine	Internet
Political Participation	.249***	.085	.162***	.197***	.201***
2000 n=240					
Political Participation	.169**	.066	.231***	.263***	.336***

* $\leq .05$, ** $\leq .01$, *** $\leq .001$

Hypothesis Six Literature Review: Political Talk and Political Participation

With respect to the various modes of political participation I have mentioned previously in the literature review section of hypothesis four, how does political discussion fit into the political context of citizen participation? After all, it is communication that makes various modes of political participation possible. In fact, regardless as to whether it is voting, campaign activity, cooperative activity or citizen-initiated contact, political conversation among citizens plays an important role in all aspects of participation. For electoral activities such as voting and campaign

activities, political discussion is an important vehicle of social influence because it is "a means whereby the preferences of individuals are brought into correspondence with political surroundings" (Huckfeldt & Sprague, 1991, p. 122). Vote choices are socially structured, not only by the characteristics of the voter, but also by the characteristics and preferences of others with whom the voter discussed politics. The effect of political discussion actually explicates itself through the political linkages between individuals and groups within the society as well as in the ways in which individual politics is imbedded within the larger community. Citizens' political preferences have important consequences for the vote choices of other citizens who look to them as political discussants. Even when the political orientation and social attributes of a voter are taken into account, the influence of the discussion partner is still apparent (Huckfeldt & Sprague, 1991). In fact, people actually choose political compatible discussion partners (Huckfeldt & Sprague, 1988; Huckfeldt & Sprague, 1987).

The availability of discussion partners is socially and structurally determined. The supply-side opportunities for political discussions can be determined by two factors. First, the likelihood of political conversation is

influenced by broad indicators of social context, such as marital status, number of adult household members, employment status, and geographical region. For example, the presence of a spouse and other adult household members enhances the opportunities for political discussion. Being in the labor force or having close personal relationships with spatially proximate core associates also increase the opportunities. Second, opportunities for political discussion are determined by relationships between discussion partners, such as role relationship, closeness and political party similarity. For example, people discuss politics more frequently with close relatives and friends (Strait, 1991). However, Huckfeldt and Sprague (1991) find that spatial proximity surpasses closeness in a relationship. In other words, respect, intimacy or social cohesion are not determinants of influence in political conversation. Friends and regular contacts appear to have more effects than close friends.

The frequency of political discussions also depends on factors of demand, which include various types of personal attributes. Personal attributes are modeled as a function of background characteristics, such as education and age, political orientation, such as political interest and partisanship, as well as media exposure. There is a

positive effect of education on political discussion (Almond & Verba, 1963; Straits, 1991). The relationship between age and political conversation is a curvilinear one. According to Strait (1991), the frequency of political conversations rises with age to a peak around age 59, and then decreases slightly with the advance of age. Citizens who have high level of political interest, strong party attachment, and who read newspapers everyday were more likely to engage in political conversations. Strait (1991) also finds that politics are discussed more frequently by residents of the Pacific Region than by residents living elsewhere in the United States.

With the important role political talk plays in adult political behavior, political discussion also plays a significant role in the pre-adult political socialization process. Jennings and Niemi (1974) find that the rate of political conversations by adolescents is positively related to projected political participation. Research also shows that high school students who have experience with deliberative democracy through National Issues Forums (NIF)⁵ develop certain knowledge, habits and skills of

⁵ National Issues Forums (NIF) is an informal, nonpartisan network of civic and educational organizations providing forums for public deliberation in hundreds of communities across the nation. NIF is rooted in the notion that citizens need to come together to deliberate

democratic citizenship and gain a better understanding of their role as citizens in a democratic civil society. Through discussion and debate, students demonstrate increased civic knowledge about how to approach a complex issue. Students are confident when presented with a difficult issue, imaginative when trying to come up with possible options, reflective when considering consequences and invested in the decisions they made. Students are also eager to get involved in community life and had clear ideas about how to do it. Students comment that NIF has a deep impact on how they engage with issues and how they interact with others outside the classroom in a public context. According to survey research conducted by Doble Research Associates, skills developed through students' experience with NIF include listening carefully to others; developing a public way to talk about problems; naming and framing an issue for public deliberation; engaging with, understanding and making decisions; including the voices of people who are not in the room before taking action; identifying the general, common or public interest; as well as reaching a reasonable, considered judgment about how to deal with an issue (Peng, 2000).

about common problems before making choices and decisions. Over the past 18 years, hundreds of community groups have held NIF forums.

Hypothesis Six: Political Talk Increases Student Political Participation

In the 1999 survey, political talk significantly correlates with all 7 modes of political participation, although all correlations are moderate. Two of the political participation modes that have the strongest correlations with political talk are attending a public meeting on public affairs and speaking out at a public meeting for public affairs. It is quite obvious that students who talked a lot more about politics were also active in meetings concerning public affairs. It also shows that most of the political conversation by youth took place at meetings concerning public affairs. Composite measure of political participation also significantly correlates with political conversation.

Table 7.29: Pearson Correlation Coefficients (r) between Political Discussions and Student Political Participation

	1999 n=401	2000 n=75	Fre- quency	Tole- rance	Pers- uasion
Write a letter to the news media	.214***	.252*	.235*	.295*	
Call in radio/TV talk show	.142**	.004	.053	.042	
Contact a candidate for public office	.122*	.330**	.181	.378***	
Attend public meetings	.231***	.139	.180	.125	
Speak out at public meetings	.228***	.244*	.272*	.291*	
Participate in Public demonstration or march	.162***	.293*	.073	.196	
Work in a political Campaign	.102*	.320**	.129	.264*	
Composite measure of political participation	.316***	.363***	.257*	.364***	

* $\leq .05$, ** $\leq .01$, *** $\leq .001$

The 2000 survey has similar results. Political talk successfully predicts political participation. Talk frequency, which is the sum of students' political conversation with their family members and their friends,

significantly correlates with 5 out of 7 modes of political participation, except calling in to a radio or television talk show and attending public meetings. Political tolerance correlates with writing letters to the news media and speaking out at public meetings, but does not correlate with any other modes of political participation. Political persuasion significantly correlates with 4 out of the 7 measures of political participation. Table 7.30 shows that writing letters to the news media and speaking out at public meetings are the two modes of political activities that are most closely related to political discussion, including frequency, tolerance and persuasion. Students who talk more about politics are more likely to engage in these two modes of political participation. Composite measure of political participation also positively and significantly correlates with talk frequency, political tolerance and political persuasion. It has a strong negative correlation with political talk initiation.

A Path Model

In order to examine the probabilistic causal relationships among the four variables specified in the model of discursive democracy on page 171, a path analysis

is performed. Table 7.30 contains the multiple correlation coefficients of the three regression equations. Equation 1 pertains to learning from the media, with the Kids Voting curriculum as the independent variable. Equation 2 is on political talk, with the Kids Voting curriculum and learning from the media as independent variables. For the 2000 equation, political talk frequency is used. Equation 3 is for political participation, with the Kids Voting curriculum, learning from the news and political talk as independent variables. Data from both 1999 and 2000 surveys are used.

Table 7.30: Multiple Correlations for Regression Equations

	R²	F	df	p
1999				
Equation 1 (Media) KV	.05	34.60	1	.000
Equation 2 (Talk) KV Media	.16	46.77	2	.000
Equation 3 (Participation) KV Media Talk	.14	18.40	3	.000
2000				
Equation 1 (Media) KV	.03	9.06	1	.003
Equation 2 (Talk) KV Media	.16	28.08	2	.000
Equation 3 (Participation) KV Media Talk	.18	15.19	3	.000

Table 7.31 indicates the path coefficients between exposure to the Kids Voting curriculum, learning from the media, political conversation and political participation.

Table 7.31: Standardized Regression Coefficients for Regression Equations

1999		Dependent Variables					
Independent Variables	Media		Talk		Participation		
	β	t	β	t	β	t	
KV	.23	5.88***	.10	2.25*	.11	2.25*	
Media			.37	8.63***	.13	2.42*	
Talk					.26	4.78***	

2000		Dependent Variables					
Independent Variables	Media		Talk		Participation		
	β	t	β	t	β	t	
KV	.16	3.01**	.13	2.44*	.09	1.38	
Media			.36	6.68***	.21	3.03**	
Talk					.26	3.88***	

* $\leq .05$, ** $\leq .01$, *** $\leq .001$

According to the recursive model generated from the 1999 data, one standard unit increase in the exposure to the Kids Voting curriculum leads to .23 standard unit increase in learning from the media. In predicting political talk, one standard unit increase in the exposure to the Kids Voting curriculum leads to .10 standard unit increase in political talk, and one standard unit increase

in learning from the media leads to .37 standard unit increase in political conversation. For political participation, one standard unit increase in the exposure to the Kids Voting curriculum leads to .11 standard unit increase in political participation, one standard unit increase in learning from the media results in .13 standard unit increase in political participation, and one standard unit increase in political conversation leads to .26 standard unit increase in political participation. The t values for the three independent variables are all significant. The R for this model in Table 7.30 indicates that this model explains 14% of variance in student political participation, but 86% of variance remains unexplained.

Table 7.30 also indicates that the 2000 causal model explains 18% of variance of student political participation, with 82% of variance remains unexplained. Path coefficients in Table 7.31 indicate that one standard unit increase in the exposure to the Kids Voting curriculum leads to .16 standard unit increase in learning from the media. Moreover, to predict political talk, one standard unit increase in the exposure to the Kids Voting curriculum leads to .13 standard unit increase in political conversation, and one standard unit increase in learning

from the media leads to .36 standard unit increase in political conversation among students. In predicting political participation, exposure to the Kids Voting curriculum does not have a direct impact on student political participation. However, one standard unit increase in learning from the media leads to .21 standard unit increase in political participation, and one standard unit increase in political talk results in .26 standard unit increase in political participation.

The causal models are also presented in Figure 7.2 and Figure 7.3 with path coefficients and residuals specified. In the 1999 model, the three residuals indicate that the unexplained variance in each of the three dependent variables is high. The residuals also indicate that there are other factors outside of the model that contribute to student political participation. Overall, the model shows a causal representation of student political participation indicating that many other factors have to be considered.

To estimate the total effect of the independent variables on the dependent variable in the 1999 model, both direct and indirect effects are computed. P_{12} represents the direct effect of exposure to the Kids Voting curriculum on learning from the media, and there is no indirect effect for this equation. P_{23} is the direct effect of learning

from the media on political conversation, there is no indirect effect. To calculate the total effect of exposure to the Kids Voting curriculum on political conversation, the following equation is used.

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Total effect of KV on political talk} &= P_{13} + P_{12} \times P_{23} = \\ &.10 + .09 = .19 \end{aligned}$$

To calculate the total effect of exposure to the Kids Voting curriculum on political participation, the following equation is utilized.

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Total effect of KV on participation} &= P_{14} + P_{12} \times P_{24} + \\ &P_{13} \times P_{34} + P_{12} \times P_{23} \times P_{34} = .11 + .09 + .02 + .03 = .19 \end{aligned}$$

And to calculate the total effect of learning from the media on political participation, the below formula is used.

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Total effect of the media on participation} &= P_{24} + P_{23} \times \\ &P_{34} = .13 + .10 = .23 \end{aligned}$$

Figure 7.2: The 1999 Path Model of Discursive Democracy

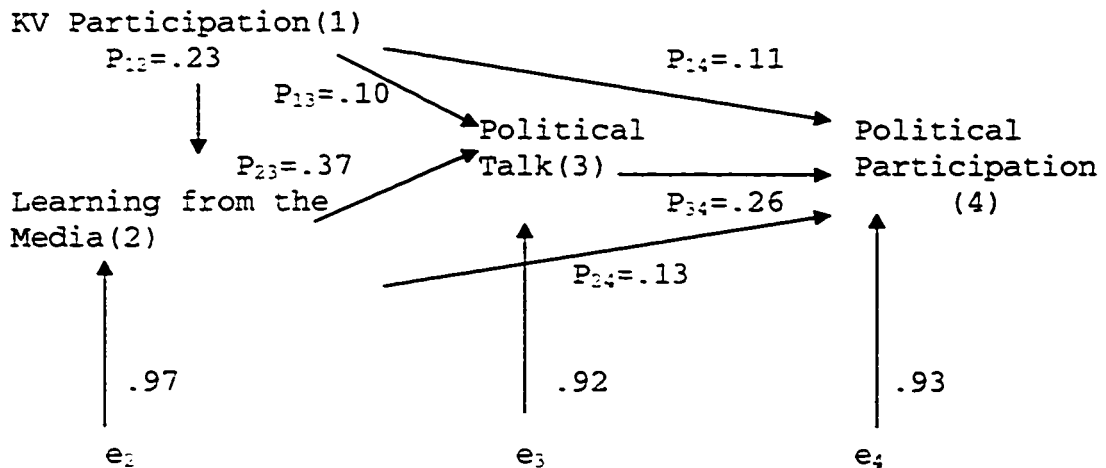
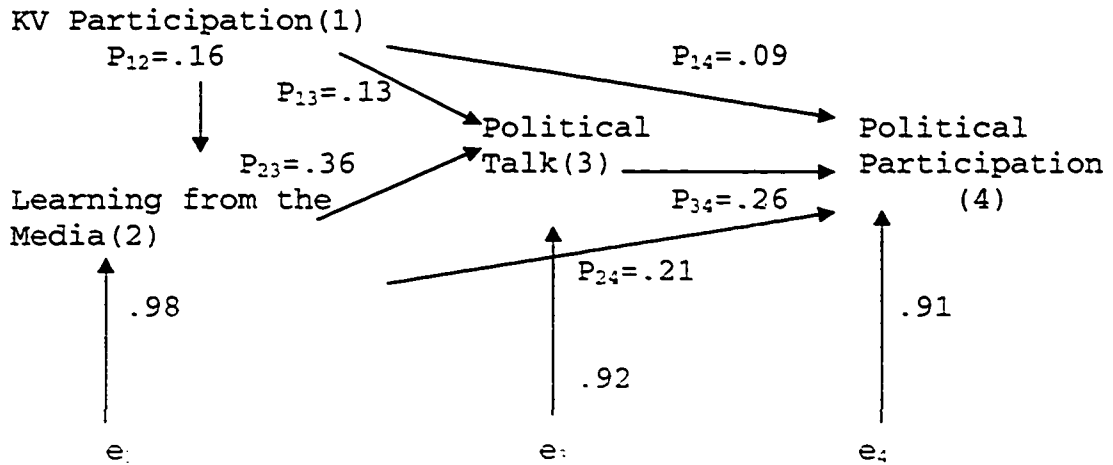


Figure 7.3: The 2000 Path Model of Discursive Democracy



Similar to the 1999 model, the 2000 model also has high residuals, which show that there are other variables to be considered to explain student political participation. To calculate the total effect of the independent variables on each of the dependent variables, both direct and indirect effects are computed. P_{12} indicates the direct effect of exposure to the Kids Voting curriculum on learning from the media, and there is no indirect effect between these two variables. P_{23} shows the direct effect of learning from the media on political talk, and there is no indirect effect. To assess the total effect of exposure to the Kids Voting curriculum on political conversation, the following formula is used.

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Total effect of KV on political talk} &= P_{13} + P_{12} \times P_{23} = \\ &= .13 + .06 = .19 \end{aligned}$$

To assess the total effect of exposure to the Kids Voting curriculum on political participation, the following formula is used. P_{14} , however, is not statistically significant.

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Total effect of KV on participation} &= P_{14} + P_{13} \times P_{34} + \\ &P_{12} \times P_{23} \times P_{34} + P_{12} \times P_{24} = .09 + .03 + .01 + .03 = .16 \end{aligned}$$

To assess the total effect of learning from the media on political participation, the below formula is utilized.

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Total effect of the media on participation} &= P_{21} - P_{21} \times \\ P_{11} &= .21 - .09 = .12 \end{aligned}$$

Conclusion

This chapter examined the six hypotheses proposed in the beginning of the chapter. All six hypotheses were sustained by both the 1999 and 2000 surveys. Because political participation was not measured in the 1998 survey, only three hypotheses were sustained by the 1998 survey.

Survey results showed that the Kids Voting curriculum contributed to students' learning from the media. This result was sustained by all three surveys. The impact of the Kids Voting curriculum on the amount of information students received from the media varied with the nature of the election. If it were a presidential election year, the

impact Kids Voting was smaller. However, if only local or state elections were held, the impact of the Kids Voting program were more substantial. One of the possible reasons was that there were fewer competing sources of information during subnational elections.

Exposure to the Kids Voting curriculum also generated more political discussion among students. This result was sustained by all three surveys. Moreover, the 1999 survey showed that the Kids Voting curriculum contributed the most to the discussion of government, economy, education and foreign affairs by youth. In the 2000 survey, the Kids Voting curriculum contributed to political discussion at home for all grades and to political discussion among 5th and 6th graders, but not among high school students. The Kids Voting curriculum also contributed to political tolerance for all students and political persuasion among high school students.

News media use also contributed to political discussion. This result was sustained by all three surveys. According to the 1999 survey results, news media contributed the most to political discussion on government, economy and foreign affairs. Information students received from the media also contributed to student political discussion with family members and friends. It also added

to political tolerance and political persuasion. Correlation analysis on patterns of media use and political discussion showed that in 1999, print media correlated slightly more significant with political talk than electronic media. In the 2000 survey, information from the newspaper, television and the Internet all correlated significantly with political discussion.

The last three hypotheses discussed in this chapter pertain to the effect of the Kids Voting curriculum, news media use and political conversation on political participation. Because political participation was not studied in the 1998 survey, only the 1999 and 2000 survey results were used to examine the contributing factors of political participation. In terms of the Kids Voting curriculum and political participation, the two modes of political activity that were predicted by the Kids Voting program for both years were public meeting attendance and speaking out at public meetings.

Information from the media was actually the strongest predictor of political participation. It significantly correlated with all modes of political participation, with meeting related activities having the strongest correlations. Information from the media most strongly correlated with public meeting attendance and speaking out

at meetings. Analysis on the relationship between patterns of media use and political participation showed that electronic media use did not correlate with participation, while print media had positive correlations with participation. Moreover, in the 2000 survey, information from the Internet correlated most significantly with participation than any other modes of media use.

Political conversation also contributed to political participation. In the 1999 survey, political discussion contributed to all modes of political participation. The 2000 survey showed that writing letters to the news media and speaking out at public meetings were the two modes of political activities that were most closely related to political discussion. This held for all three dimensions of political discussion: frequency, tolerance and persuasion.

Path models were presented at the end of the chapter to assess a causal model of political participation. It was found that exposure to the Kids Voting curriculum, learning from the media and political conversation accounted for 7% of the variance in the 1999 model and 9% of the variance in the 2000 model. Although the variance explained was not high, there were still some degrees of variance of student political participation explained by

the model. Moreover, all three independent variables were significant predictors of student political participation.

CHAPTER 8: CONCLUSION

The decline in political participation of the youngest cohort of the electorate has concerned researchers of various disciplines in social science. The young are not only less interested in politics, they also pay less attention to the news. As a result, they are also less informed.

To address the problem of youth apathy and to improve youth political participation, Kids Voting USA, a non-profit organization with the mission to engage youth in the electoral process, was established in 1988. The organization spread to 38 states plus the District of Columbia by 1996. The unique program offered by Kids Voting USA enables youth to visit official polling sites on election day and cast a ballot for the same candidates as the official ballot in local, state and national elections, including the vote for president, vice president, U.S. representatives and other state and local offices.

Kids Voting USA also provides curriculum for participating schools. Curriculum content correlates to national and state social studies standards. The Kids

Voting curriculum is designed to be proactive and for students to have fun in their learning experience.

Kids Voting Western New York, an affiliate of Kids Voting USA, was founded in 1996 by the Buffalo News. Currently housed at and administratively supported by Erie 1 BOCES, KVWNY sponsors various activities at schools in Erie and Niagara Counties, such as National Kids Voting Week, Kidsvention and the election. Starting from 1998, in cooperation with Department of Communication at the University at Buffalo, annual Kids Voting evaluation surveys were held to assess the impact of the program.

This study used 1998, 1999 and 2000 student evaluation surveys to examine the impact of the curriculum on students. Students' overall experience with the Kids Voting program is optimistic. Students who reported that they liked voting increase every year from 1998 to 2000. Students who indicated that they would vote next year also increase steadily. More than half of the students specify that they had fun with the program.

Students' participation in the program is also promising. Students who registered to vote increase up to 74% in 2000. Students who voted also increase, up to approximately 72% in 2000. Students who reported that they

participated in the Kids Voting activities at their school also increase.

Kids Voting program also improves student attitude toward voting. From 1998 to 2000, the percentage of students who indicated that it is important to vote increases about 2% every year.

Students' overall experience and participation in the program as well as their attitude toward voting were further analyzed using proportion comparison based on grade, years the school they were attending had participated in the program and whether their parents or legal guardians had voted in the election. It was found that grade is an important factor in determining students' experience with and participation in the program. The younger the students, the more likely the students would have a good experience with the curriculum.

Years participated in the program is also a significant factor. The more years the schools have participated in the program, the more likely the students will like voting, will vote next year, and will have fun with the program. Similarly, the longer the students are exposed to the program, the more likely they will register to vote, to vote, and to participate in the Kids Voting program at their school.

Whether parents voted was also examined as a factor that would affect the impact of Kids Voting curriculum. For the 1999 survey, whether parents voted is a significant factor in determining students' experience with and participation in the program. Results from the 2000 survey were mixed. Whether parents voted determines participation in Kids Voting, but failed to determine students' experience with the program.

Grade, years in the program and whether parents voted were then entered into linear regression models as independent variables. Kids Voting program evaluation variables were entered as dependent variables. The reason was to examine which one of the independent variables is a strong predictor of the dependent variables. It was found that grade and years participated in the program are both important variables that predict the impact of the curriculum. Whether parents voted is much less strong in predicting the impact of the program.

In 1997 and 1998, KVWNY and the Department of Communication at the University at Buffalo also conducted community surveys to assess the awareness, impression and impact of Kids Voting program on Western New York. Results showed that more than 80% of the voters in Erie County were aware of the program. Approximately 90% of the voters had

a favorable impression of the program. 31% to 35% of the Erie County voters specified that the Kids Voting program was an important factor in their decision to vote, and about 10% of the voters indicated that the Kids Voting program was the determining factor in their decision to vote. About 66% of voters surveyed reported that they were able to bring their children to the polls with them on election day.

A discursive model of youth political socialization was examined to further understand the contribution of Kids Voting curriculum to the making of democratic citizenship. Analyses were performed on the impact of the program on student media use, political conversation and political participation. It was found that exposure to the Kids Voting curriculum increases the amount of information students gained from the media, political conversation among students and political participation. It was also found that the more students learned from the media, the more likely they would hold political discussions and to be politically active. Students who held political conversation more often were also found to be more likely to participate in politics.

An analysis of the patterns of student media use showed that most of the students received their political

information from television, followed by newspaper, radio, the Internet and magazine. This finding also indicated that a newer form of the media, such as the Internet, superceded an older form of the media, in this study magazine, to become an important source of political information for youth.

Correlation analysis between exposure to the Kids Voting curriculum and information students received from the media showed that the Kids Voting curriculum contributed to the amount of information students received from the media. The impact was actually more obvious for state and local elections than for the presidential election. In fact, the important role the Kids Voting program played in socializing students to gather political information from the media during off year elections further demonstrated the impact of the program on youth.

It was also found that the Kids Voting curriculum contributed to student political discussion. The impact was stronger for younger students than for older students. The subjects that the Kids Voting curriculum had the most impact on were government, economy, education and foreign affairs. The program also contributed to political tolerance for both younger and older children. It also

motivated older students to engage in politically persuasive behavior.

This study also found that student news media use contributed to political discussion. Again, the impact of news media usage on political discussion was more prominent among younger students than among older students.

Information students received from the news media also enabled students to be more politically tolerant and to be more willing to engage in politically persuasive behavior.

In addition to its impact on student media usage and political discussion the Kids Voting curriculum also affected student political participation. The modes of political participation that were most influenced by the exposure to the curriculum were attending public meetings and speaking out at public meetings.

Student news media usage also influenced their political participation. In fact, it was found that information students received from the media significantly correlated to every mode of political participation in both the 1999 and 2000 surveys.

It was also found that political discussion correlated with every mode of political participation in the 1999 survey. In the 2000 survey, political discussion frequency correlated with five out of the seven modes of political

participation. Political tolerance correlated with writing letters to the news media and speaking out at public meetings, and political persuasion correlated with four out of the seven modes of political participation.

The three years' Kids Voting evaluation surveys had their strengths and weaknesses. The strengths of the three Kids Voting student evaluation surveys are survey question consistency, equal distribution of student grade levels in the sample as well as assistance from KVWNY in fielding the surveys. Consistency in survey questions, such as all the evaluation questions, media use questions and participation questions, makes comparisons across different years possible. The second strength of the surveys is that students of different grade levels are equally distributed in the sample. Moreover, KVWNY's enthusiastic assistance and cooperation in all the surveys make the surveys possible.

There are, however, some weaknesses associated with the surveys. First of all, return rates in the 2000 survey decreased from 47% both in 1998 and 1999 to 28%. The low compliance rate, especially in 2000, caused a biased sample, which in turn made objective inference less possible. Secondly, the ability of younger students to understand and fill out the survey was a concern. However,

efforts to address this concern were made in 1999 when members of research teams actually read out loud the survey questions to the students.

Future directions of the Kids Voting evaluation surveys in Western New York would be to extend the measurement of some of the variables. For example, media attention and comprehension measures may validate the measurement of current media use questions. Second, the possibility of interviewing the parents could be explored. Thirdly, consistency in the measurement of student political conversation questions could be considered so comparison across different years is possible. Fourthly, a comparison of students participating in Kids Voting and students who are not exposed to the program should be conducted to further validate the impact of the program.

In sum, given the decline in political socialization research over the past two decades, this thesis is an endeavor to shed new light to the process of youth political socialization. With the introduction of the Kids Voting curriculum across many states, there is a hope that youth and voter political participation will be revived.

APPENDIX 1: KIDS VOTING STUDENT SURVEY DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS

Part I: Kids Voting Program Evaluation Variables

1998

	Total N (%)	Valid N (%)	Missing N (%)	Mean	SD	Frequency Yes N (%)	Frequency No N (%)
KV Registered	1796 (100)	1789 (99.6)	7 (.4)	.63	.484	1119 (62.3)	670 (37.3)
KV Voted	1796 (100)	1793 (99.8)	3 (.2)	.55	.497	990 (55.1)	803 (44.7)
Liked Voting	1796 (100)	990 (55.1)	806 (44.9)	.83	.376	822 (45.8)	168 (9.4)
Important to Vote	1796 (100)	1793 (99.8)	3 (.2)	.88	.324	1580 (88.1)	213 (11.9)
Vote Next Year	1796 (100)	1787 (99.5)	9 (.5)	.77	.420	1380 (76.8)	407 (22.7)
Had Fun	1796 (100)	1714 (95.4)	82 (4.6)	.55	.498	939 (52.3)	775 (43.2)

1999

	Total N (%)	Valid N (%)	Missing N (%)	Mean	SD	Frequency Yes N (%)	Frequency No N (%)		
KV Registered	683 (100)	679 (99.4)	4 (.6)	.54	.499	365 (53.4)	314 (46.0)		
KV Voted	683 (100)	681 (99.7)	2 (.3)	.45	.498	309 (45.2)	372 (54.5)		
Liked Voting	683 (100)	635 (93)	48 (7)	.56	.497	357 (52.3)	278 (40.7)		
Important to Vote	683 (100)	682 (99.9)	1 (.1)	.91	.288	620 (90.8)	62 (9.1)		
Vote Next Year	683 (100)	681 (99.7)	2 (.3)	.78	.413	533 (78)	148 (21.7)		
Had Fun	683 (100)	652 (95.5)	31 (4.5)	.46	.499	302 (44.2)	350 (51.2)		
	Total N (%)	Valid N (%)	Missing N (%)	Mean	SD	Frequency N (%)			
						A Lot	Some	Not Much	None
KV Participation	683 (100)	680 (99.6)	3 (.4)	1.14	1.04 2	83 (12.2)	173 (25.3)	179 (26.2)	245 (35.9)

2000

	Total N (%)	Valid N (%)	Missing N (%)	Mean	SD	Frequency Yes N (%)	Frequency No N (%)		
KV Registered	362 (100)	362 (100)	0	.74	.438	269 (74.3)	93 (25.7)		
KV Voted	362 (100)	361 (99.7)	1 (.3)	.72	.451	259 (71.5)	102 (28.2)		
Liked Voting	362 (100)	357 (98.6)	5 (1.4)	.71	.452	255 (70.4)	102 (28.2)		
Important to Vote	362 (100)	360 (99.4)	2 (.6)	.92	.273	331 (91.4)	29 (8)		
Vote Next Year	362 (100)	360 (99.4)	2 (.6)	.84	.363	304 (84)	56 (15.5)		
Had Fun	362 (100)	358 (98.9)	4 (1.1)	.60	.490	215 (59.4)	143 (39.5)		
	Total N (%)	Valid N (%)	Missing N (%)	Mean	SD	Frequency N (%)			
						A Lot	Some	Not Much	None
KV Participatio n	362 (100)	359 (99.2)	3 (.8)	1.43	1.028	64 (17.7)	108 (29.8)	106 (29.3)	81 (22.4)

Part II: Media Use Variables

1998

	Total N (%)	Valid N (%)	Missing N (%)	Mean	SD	Frequency N (%)			
						A Lot	Some	A Little	None
Paper	1796 (100)	1793 (99.8)	3 (.2)	3.17	1.238	544 (30.3)	576 (32.1)	319 (17.8)	354 (19.7)
TV	1796 (100)	1785 (99.4)	11 (.6)	2.67	1.346	1323 (48.7)	422 (23.5)	249 (13.9)	240 (13.4)
Radio	1796 (100)	1792 (99.8)	4 (.2)	3.95	1.104	194 (10.8)	354 (19.7)	523 (29.1)	721 (40.1)
Magazine	1796 (100)	1788 (99.6)	8 (.4)	4.37	.987	114 (6.4)	198 (11)	352 (19.6)	1124 (62.6)
Internet	1796 (100)	1785 (99.4)	11 (.6)	4.43	1.094	159 (8.8)	138 (7.7)	188 (10.5)	1300 (72.4)

1999

	Total N (%)	Valid N (%)	Missing N (%)	Mean	SD	Frequency N (%)			
						A Lot	Some	A Little	None
Paper	683 (100)	675 (98.8)	8 (1.2)	1.61	1.054	157 (23)	235 (34.4)	146 (21.4)	137 (20.1)
TV	683 (100)	679 (99.4)	4 (.6)	2.05	1.025	291 (42.6)	214 (31.3)	91 (13.3)	83 (12.2)
Radio	683 (100)	676 (99)	7 (1)	1.20	1.005	80 (11.7)	184 (26.9)	206 (30.2)	206 (30.2)
Magazine	683 (100)	675 (98.8)	8 (1.2)	.64	.902	35 (5.1)	91 (13.3)	142 (20.8)	407 (59.6)
Internet	683 (100)	672 (98.4)	11 (1.6)	.68	1.028	66 (9.7)	84 (12.3)	94 (13.8)	428 (62.7)

2000

	Total N (%)	Valid N (%)	Missing N (%)	Mean	SD	Frequency N (%)			
						A Lot	Some	A Little	None
Paper	362 (100)	354 (97.8)	8 (2.2)	1.90	1.036	123 (34)	121 (33.4)	60 (16.6)	50 (13.8)
TV	362 (100)	351 (97)	11 (3)	2.40	.942	227 (62.7)	65 (18)	32 (8.8)	27 (7.5)
Radio	362 (100)	351 (97)	11 (3)	1.41	1.013	59 (16.3)	105 (29)	109 (30.1)	78 (21.5)
Magazine	362 (100)	347 (95.9)	15 (4.1)	.84	1.011	32 (8.8)	58 (16)	81 (22.4)	176 (48.6)
Internet	362 (100)	348 (96.1)	14 (3.9)	1.12	1.121	54 (14.9)	79 (21.8)	69 (19.1)	146 (40.3)

Part III: Whether Parents Voted

1999

	Total N (%)	Valid N (%)	Missing N (%)	Mean	SD	Frequency Yes N (%)	Frequency No N (%)
Mother Voted	683 (100)	582 (85.2)	101 (14.8)	.73	.445	424 (62.1)	158 (23.1)
Father Voted	683 (100)	513 (75.1)	170 (24.9)	.72	.452	367 (53.7)	146 (21.4)

2000

	Total N (%)	Valid N (%)	Missing N (%)	Mean	SD	Frequency Yes N (%)	Frequency No N (%)
Mother Voted	362 (100)	324 (89.5)	38 (10.5)	.84	.368	272 (75.1)	52 (14.4)
Father Voted	362 (100)	312 (86.2)	50 (13.8)	.83	.379	258 (71.3)	54 (14.9)

Part IV: Political Talk Variables

1998

	Total N (%)	Valid N (%)	Missing N (%)	Mean	SD	Frequency Yes N (%)	Frequency No N (%)
Political Discussion at Home	1796 (100)	1726 (96.1)	70 (3.9)	1.48	.500	824 (45.9)	902 (50.2)

1999

	Total N (%)	Valid N (%)	Missing N (%)	Mean	SD	Frequency N (%)			
						Often	Sometimes	Seldom	Never
Government	683 (100)	637 (93.3)	46 (6.7)	1.21	.988	78 (11.4)	159 (23.3)	221 (32.4)	179 (26.2)
Economy	683 (100)	634 (92.8)	49 (7.2)	1.27	1.019	86 (12.6)	179 (26.2)	189 (27.7)	180 (26.4)
Crime	683 (100)	662 (96.9)	21 (3.1)	1.99	.893	210 (30.7)	285 (41.7)	117 (17.1)	50 (7.3)
Education	683 (100)	632 (92.5)	51 (7.5)	1.75	.951	149 (21.8)	252 (36.9)	154 (22.5)	77 (11.3)
Religion	683 (100)	651 (95.3)	32 (4.7)	1.46	1.018	127 (18.6)	175 (25.6)	220 (32.2)	129 (18.9)
Foreign Affairs	683 (100)	636 (93.1)	47 (6.9)	1.30	.971	81 (11.9)	178 (26.1)	225 (32.9)	152 (22.3)

2000

	Total N (%)	Valid N (%)	Missing N (%)	Mean	SD	Frequency N (%)			
						Often	Some- times	Seldom	Never
Political Talk with Parents	362 (100)	332 (91.7)	30 (8.3)	1.64	.982	69 (19.1)	125 (34.5)	86 (23.8)	52 (14.4)
Political Talk with Friends	362 (100)	330 (91.2)	32 (8.8)	1.12	.896	18 (5)	100 (27.6)	115 (31.8)	97 (26.8)
With People Whose Ideas Were Different	362 (100)	311 (85.9)	51 (14.1)	1.64	1.071	80 (22.1)	101 (27.9)	68 (18.8)	62 (17.1)
	Total N (%)	Valid N (%)	Missing N (%)	Mean	SD	Frequency N (%)			
						Yes	No		
Talk Somebody into Being for a Candidate You Like	362 (100)	297 (82)	65 (18)	.45	.499	135 (37.3)	162 (44.8)		

Part V: Political Participation Variables

1999

	Total N (%)	Valid N (%)	Missing N (%)	Mean	SD	Frequency Yes N (%)	Frequency No N (%)
Wrote Letters to the Media	683 (100)	626 (91.7)	57 (8.3)	.33	.472	209 (30.6)	417 (61.1)
Called in Talk Shows	683 (100)	648 (94.9)	35 (5.1)	.55	.497	359 (52.6)	289 (42.3)
Contacted Elected Officials	683 (100)	647 (94.7)	36 (5.3)	.26	.440	170 (24.9)	477 (69.8)
Attended Public Meetings	683 (100)	597 (87.4)	86 (12.6)	.35	.478	210 (30.7)	387 (56.7)
Spoken Out at Public Meetings	683 (100)	620 (90.8)	63 (9.2)	.13	.339	82 (12)	538 (78.8)
Attended Demonstration	683 (100)	623 (91.2)	60 (8.8)	.27	.445	169 (24.7)	454 (66.5)
Worked in Political Campaign	683 (100)	627 (91.8)	56 (8.2)	.15	.362	97 (14.2)	530 (77.6)

2000

	Total N (%)	Valid N (%)	Missing N (%)	Mean	SD	Frequency Yes N (%)	Frequency No N (%)
Wrote Letters to the Media	362 (100)	320 (88.4)	42 (11.6)	.23	.424	75 (20.7)	245 (67.7)
Called in Talk Shows	362 (100)	336 (92.8)	26 (7.2)	.44	.497	148 (40.9)	188 (51.9)
Contacted Elected Officials	362 (100)	330 (91.2)	32 (8.8)	.15	.353	48 (13.3)	282 (77.9)
Attended Public Meetings	362 (100)	315 (87)	47 (13)	.27	.443	84 (23.2)	231 (63.8)
Spoken Out at Public Meetings	362 (100)	326 (90.1)	36 (9.9)	.09	.290	30 (8.3)	296 (81.8)
Attended Demonstration	362 (100)	315 (87)	47 (13)	.27	.446	86 (23.8)	229 (63.3)
Worked in Political Campaign	362 (100)	323 (89.2)	39 (10.8)	.15	.362	50 (13.8)	273 (75.4)

APPENDIX 2: KIDS VOTING 1998 STUDENT SURVEY QUESTIONS

KIDS VOTING SURVEY

Thank You

The Kids Voting New York would like to thank you in advance for completing this survey questionnaire. Your answers will help us understand how well the Kids Voting program is doing. Just as importantly, your answers will help us improve it. Most of the questions must be answered using the “bubble” answer sheet stapled to the end of the questionnaire. Some of the questions near the end require written answers. For these, please write on the questionnaire itself in the spaces provided. When you are done, please hand-in this instruction sheet, the questionnaire and the bubble sheet answer form, *leaving them stapled*.

Instructions

(Please read fully through the instructions below before starting.)

- 1) Note the Questionnaire Number in the lower right hand corner of this instruction sheet.
- 2) Turn the Answer Sheet (bubble sheet) over to Side Two.
- 3) Write your Questionnaire Number in the section labeled “Identification Number,” and fill in the bubbles.
- 4) Also complete the Sex and Grade items with the bubbles.
- 5) Do not complete the Name section either on the back of the bubble sheet or write your name on the front. This is an “anonymous” survey.
- 6) Now that this back section is complete, return to the first page of the questionnaire and begin the questionnaire with question 1.
- 7) When you are done, please hand in the questionnaire, with the bubble sheet attached to it as mentioned.

Kids Voting New York -- 1998 Student Survey

Name of Your School:

1. Did you register to vote? [kvreg: KV Registered]

A = Yes [1]
B = No [0]
[9] Missing

2. Did you vote? [kvvote: KV Voted]

A = Yes [1]
B = No [0]
[9] Missing

3. Did you like voting? [likev: Liked Voting]

A = Yes [1]
B = No [0]
[9] Missing

4. Do you think it is important to vote? [impo: Important to vote]

A = Yes [1]
B = No [0]
[9] Missing

5. Would you like to vote next year? [votnx: Would vote next year]

A = Yes [1]
B = No [0]
[9] Missing

6. Did you have fun with Kids Voting? [fun: Had fun with KV]

A = Yes [1]
B = No [0]
[9] Missing

7. How much information did you get from newspapers about the election?
[papers: Info from papers]

- A = a great deal [4]
- B = a lot [3]
- C = some [2]
- D = a little [1]
- E = none [0]
- [9] Missing

8. How much information did you get from the television about the election?
[tv: Info from TV]

- A = a great deal [4]
- B = a lot [3]
- C = some [2]
- D = a little [1]
- E = none [0]
- [9] Missing

9. How much information did you get from the radio about the election?
[radio: Info from radio]

- A = a great deal [4]
- B = a lot [3]
- C = some [2]
- D = a little [1]
- E = none [0]
- [9] Missing

10. How much information did you get from magazines about the election?
[maga: Info from magazines]

- A = a great deal [4]
- B = a lot [3]
- C = some [2]
- D = a little [1]
- E = none [0]
- [9] Missing

11. How much information did you get from the internet (computers) about the election.

[inter: Info from the Internet]

- A = a great deal [4]
- B = a lot [3]
- C = some [2]
- D = a little [1]
- E = none [0]
- [9] Missing

12. On average, how many hours a day do you spend browsing the Internet?

[brow: Browsing the Internet]

- A = a great deal [4]
- B = a lot [3]
- C = some [2]
- D = a little [1]
- E = none [0]
- [9] Missing

13. How important were the political ads you saw on TV in making your voting decisions?

[ads1: ads' importance]

- A = Very Important [4]
- B = Important [3]
- C = Somewhat Important [2]
- D = Not Very Important [1]
- E = Not At All Important [0]
- [9] Missing

14. What was your overall impression of the political ads that you saw on TV?

[ads2: Impressions of ads]

- A = Excellent [4]
- B = Good [3]
- C = OK [2]
- D = Poor [1]
- E = Very Poor [0]
- [9] Missing

15. Do you happen to remember the names of the candidates for the House of Representatives in Washington? [reps: representative's names]

A = Yes [1]

B = No [0] (If no, fill in bubble and skip to question #19.)

16. Who were they?

17. What were their political party affiliations?

18. Who won the election?

19. Do you happen to remember the names of the candidates for the United States Senate in Washington? [sens: senator's names]

A = Yes [1]

B = No [0] (If no, fill in bubble and skip to question #23.)

20. Who were they?

21. What were their political party affiliations?

22. Who won the election?

23. Do you happen to remember the candidates that ran in this state for Governor?
[govs: vovernor's names]

A = Yes [1]

B = No [0] (If no, fill in bubble and skip to question #27.)

24. Who were they?

25. What were their political party affiliations?

26. Who won the election?

27. When you were growing up, did your father, stepfather, or male legal guardian think of himself as ... ? [fpid: father's party ID]

A = Democate [1]

B = Republican [2]

C = Independent [3]

D = No Party Affiliation [4]

E = Other [5]

[9] Missing

28. When you were growing up, did your mother, stepmother, or female legal guardian think of herself as ... ? [mpid: mother's party ID]

A = Democate [1]

B = Republican [2]

C = Independent [3]

D = No Party Affiliation [4]

E = Other [5]

[9] Missing

29. Did you ask your parents or legal guardians any questions or initiate discussions about candidates related to this year's elections? [**disc: home discussion**]

A = Yes [1]

B = No [0]

[9] **Missing**

30. What is your ethnic background: [**ethnic: ethnic background**]

A = Asian [1]

B = African American [2]

C = Hispanic (Latino) [3]

D = White (Anglo) [4]

E = Other [5]

[9] **Missing**

THANKS AGAIN FOR HELPING WITH THE SURVEY!

(Please return it to your teacher)

APPENDIX 3: KIDS VOTING 1999 STUDENT SURVEY QUESTIONS

Kids Voting Western New York

1999 Student Survey

Thank You

Kids Voting Western New York and the University at Buffalo would like to thank you in advance for completing this survey questionnaire. Your answers will help us understand how well the Kids Voting program is doing. Just as importantly, your answers will help us improve it. All of the survey questions must be answered using the “bubble” answer sheet. If you have any questions, please raise your hand. When you are done, please hand in this instruction sheet, the questionnaire and the bubble sheet answer form.

Please note that this is NOT a test. There are no right or wrong answers. Please feel free to check any answer that applies.

Instructions

(Please read fully through the instructions below before starting.)

- 1) Do NOT complete the Name section either on the back of the bubble answer sheet or by writing your name on the front. This is an “anonymous” survey.
- 2) Please do not write on the questionnaire form.
- 3) When you are done, please hand in this instruction sheet, the questionnaire and the bubble answer sheet.
- 4) You may now start the questionnaire with Question 1.



Kids Voting Western New York – 1999 Student Survey

1. Did you register to vote for Kids Voting? [*kvreg: KV Registered*]

- A) Yes [1]
- B) No [0]
- [9] Missing

2. Did you vote in the Kids Voting election? [*kvvote: KV Voted*]

- A) Yes [1]
- B) No [0]
- [9] Missing

3. Did you like voting? [*likev: Liked Voting*]

- A) Yes [1]
- B) No [0]
- [9] Missing

4. Do you think it is important to vote? [*impo: Important to vote*]

- A) Yes [1]
- B) No [0]
- [9] Missing

5. Would you like to vote next year? [*votnx: Would vote next year*]

- A) Yes [1]
- B) No [0]
- [9] Missing

6. Did you have fun with Kids Voting? [*fun: Had fun with KV*]

- A) Yes [1]
- B) No [0]
- [9] Missing

7. How much did you participate in the Kids Voting activities in your school?
[*kvpar: KV Participation*]

- A) A lot [3]
- B) Some [2]
- C) Not much [1]
- D) None [0]
- [9] Missing

8. Have you ever voted in school to elect any of the following?

[schel: School Election]

- A) US President [1]
 - B) A Member of the US Congress (House of Representative or Senate) [2]
 - C) State, County or Local Official [3]
 - D) Other (Issues, Not school related offices) [4]
 - E) Have never voted [5]
- [9] Missing

9. If you are old enough to vote in an adult election, have you registered to vote?

[regist: Registered to vote]

- A) Yes [1]
 - B) No [0]
 - C) Not applicable [8] Missing
- [9] Missing

10. Some people seem to follow what's going on in government and public affairs most of the time, whether there's an election going on or not. Others aren't that interested. Would you say you follow what's going on in government and current events most of the time, some of the time, only now and then, or hardly at all? *[effic1: Follow current events]*

- A) Hardly at all [1]
 - B) Only now and then [2]
 - C) Some of the time [3]
 - D) Most of the time [4]
 - E) Don't know [8] Missing
- [9] Missing

11. How much of the time do you think you can trust the government in Washington to do what is right? *[effic2: Trust]*

- A) Just about always [3]
 - B) Most of the time [2]
 - C) Some of the time [1]
 - D) No opinion [7] Missing
 - E) Don't know [8] Missing
- [9] Missing

Please tell us how much you agree or disagree with these statements:

12. "I don't think that elected government leaders care much what people like me or my parents think." Do you: [*effic3: Government leaders care*]

- A) Agree [0]
- B) Disagree [2]
- C) Neither agree nor disagree [1]
- D) It depends [7] *Missing*
- E) Don't know [8] *Missing*
[9] *Missing*

13. "Sometimes politics and government seem so complicated a person like me can't really understand what is going on." Do you: [*effic4: Politics too complicated*]

- A) Agree [0]
- B) Disagree [2]
- C) Neither agree nor disagree [1]
- D) It depends [7] *Missing*
- E) Don't know [8] *Missing*
[9] *Missing*

14. Do you think that quite a few of the people running the government are dishonest, not very many are, or do you think hardly any of them are dishonest? [*effic5: Dishonest*]

- A) Quite a few are dishonest [1]
- B) Not very many are dishonest [2]
- C) Hardly any are dishonest [3]
- D) No opinion [7] *Missing*
- E) Don't know [8] *Missing*
[9] *Missing*

15. Do you think that people in government waste a lot of money we pay in taxes, waste some of it, or don't waste very much of it? [*effic6: Waste money*]

- A) A lot [1]
- B) Some [2]
- C) Not very much [3]
- D) No opinion [7] *Missing*
- E) Don't know [8] *Missing*
[9] *Missing*

16. How much do you feel that having elections makes the government pay attention to what the people think? [*effic7: Government pays attention*]

- A) A good deal [3]
- B) Some [2]
- C) Not much [1]
- D) It depends [7] *Missing*
- E) Don't know [8] *Missing*
[9] *Missing*

17. Over the years, how much attention do you feel the government pays to what the people think when it decides what to do—a good deal, some, or not much? [*effic8: Government pays attention*]

- A) A good deal [3]
- B) Some [2]
- C) Not much [1]
- D) It depends [7] *Missing*
- E) Don't know [8] *Missing*
[9] *Missing*

18. What is President Clinton's political party? [*clinto: Clinton's party ID*]

- A) Republican [1]
- B) Democrat [2]
- C) Reform [3]
- D) Other [4]
- E) Don't know [5]
[9] *Missing*

19. Generally speaking, do you usually think of yourself as a Republican, a Democrat, an Independent, or what? [*partyi: Party ID*]

- A) Republican [1]
- B) Democrat [2]
- C) Independent [3]
- D) Other [4]
- E) None [5]
[9] *Missing*

20. If you consider yourself a Democrat or a Republican, how strongly do you feel?
[stren: Strength of Party ID]

- A) Strongly [2]
- B) Not very strongly [1]
- C) Don't know [8] *Missing*
- [9] *Missing*

21. Generally speaking, does your mother (or female legal guardian) usually think of herself as a Republican, a Democrat, an Independent, or what?
[mpid: Mother's Party ID]

- A) Republican [1]
- B) Democrat [2]
- C) Independent [3]
- D) None [4]
- E) Don't know [5]
- [9] *Missing*

22. Did your mother (or female legal guardian) vote in the election held early in November? *[mvot: Mother voted]*

- A) Yes [1]
- B) No [0]
- C) Don't know [8]
- [9] *Missing*

23. Generally speaking, does your father (or male legal guardian) usually think of himself as a Republican, a Democrat, an Independent, or what?
[fpid: Father's Party ID]

- A) Republican [1]
- B) Democrat [2]
- C) Independent [3]
- D) None [4]
- E) Don't know [5]
- [9] *Missing*

24. Did your father (or male legal guardian) vote in the election held early in November?
[fvote: Father voted]

- A) Yes [1]
- B) No [0]
- C) Don't know [8]
- [9] *Missing*

25. Generally speaking, would you say that you personally care a good deal which party wins a Presidential election, or don't you care very much which party wins?
[win: Which party wins]

- A) Don't know [8] Missing
- B) Don't care [0]
- C) Care a good deal [1]
[9] Missing

26. Generally speaking, who do you think has the most influence over your own political view? *[influe: Political influence]*

- A) Parents or other relatives [1]
- B) Teachers [2]
- C) Friends [3]
- D) People in the media [4]
- E) Others [5]
[9] Missing

Now, we are going to ask you some political participation questions. Please tell me whether you have used any of the following forms of expression:

27. Have you ever written a letter to a newspaper, magazine or television news program?
[letter: Write letters to the media]

- A) Yes [1]
- B) No [0]
- C) Don't remember [8] Missing
[9] Missing

28. Have you ever called in to a radio or television talk show?
[callin: Call in talk shows]

- A) Yes [1]
- B) No [0]
- C) Don't remember [8] Missing
[9] Missing

29. Have you ever written a letter to, phoned or otherwise contacted a candidate for public office or an elected official? *[conta: Contact elected officials]*

- A) Yes [1]
- B) No [0]
- C) Don't remember [8] Missing
[9] Missing

30. Have you ever attended a public meeting of an organization interested in public affairs? [*meeti: Attend public meetings*]

- A) Yes [1]
- B) No [0]
- C) Don't remember [8] Missing
[9] Missing

31. Have you ever spoken out at a public meeting of an organization interested in public affairs? [*spok: Spoken out*]

- A) Yes [1]
- B) No [0]
- C) Don't remember [8] Missing
[9] Missing

32. Have you ever taken part in a public demonstration or march? [*marc: Demonstration/March*]

- A) Yes [1]
- B) No [0]
- C) Don't remember [8] Missing
[9] Missing

33. Have you ever worked in a political campaign? [*camp: Worked in political campaign*]

- A) Yes [1]
- B) No [0]
- C) Don't remember [8] Missing
[9] Missing

Now, we are interested in finding out how much information you got from the mass media regarding this year's election.

34. How much information did you get from newspapers about the election? [*news: Info from papers*]

- A) A lot [3]
- B) Some [2]
- C) A little [1]
- D) None [0]
[9] Missing

35. How much information did you get from television about the election?

[tv: Info from TV]

- A) A lot [3]
 - B) Some [2]
 - C) A little [1]
 - D) None [0]
- [9] Missing

36. How much information did you get from radio about the election?

[radio: Info from radio]

- A) A lot [3]
 - B) Some [2]
 - C) A little [1]
 - D) None [0]
- [9] Missing

37. How much information did you get from magazines about the election?

[maga: Info from magazines]

- A) A lot [3]
 - B) Some [2]
 - C) A little [1]
 - D) None [0]
- [9] Missing

38. How much information did you get from the Internet (computers) about the election?

[inter: Info from the Internet]

- A) A lot [3]
 - B) Some [2]
 - C) A little [1]
 - D) None [0]
- [9] Missing

39. On average, how much time a day do you spend browsing the Internet?

[brow: Browsing the Internet]

- A) A lot [3]
 - B) Some [2]
 - C) A little [1]
 - D) None [0]
- [9] Missing

We are also interested in knowing how much you talk about politics. In general, how often do you talk about the following subjects? Do you talk about them often, sometimes, seldom or never?

40. How often do you talk about what the city, state or national government is doing?
[gov: Talk about government]

- | | |
|---------------|-------------|
| A) Often | [3] |
| B) Sometimes | [2] |
| C) Seldom | [1] |
| D) Never | [0] |
| E) Don't know | [8] Missing |
| | [9] Missing |

41. How often do you talk about how the economy is doing, for example, concerning inflation, prices, market place, jobs, stock market and so on?
[econ: Talk about economy]

- | | |
|---------------|-------------|
| A) Often | [3] |
| B) Sometimes | [2] |
| C) Seldom | [1] |
| D) Never | [0] |
| E) Don't know | [8] Missing |
| | [9] Missing |

42. How often do you talk about crime and violence in society?
[crime: Talk about crime]

- | | |
|---------------|-------------|
| A) Often | [3] |
| B) Sometimes | [2] |
| C) Seldom | [1] |
| D) Never | [0] |
| E) Don't know | [8] Missing |
| | [9] Missing |

43. How often do you talk about what's going on in schools or education in general?
[tscho: Talk about school/education]

- | | |
|---------------|-------------|
| A) Don't know | [8] Missing |
| B) Never | [0] |
| C) Seldom | [1] |
| D) Sometimes | [2] |
| E) Often | [3] |
| | [9] Missing |

44. How often do you talk about your religion and religious beliefs?

[religi: Talk about religion]

- A) Often [3]
- B) Sometimes [2]
- C) Seldom [1]
- D) Never [0]
- E) Don't know [8] *Missing*
[9] *Missing*

45. How often do you talk about what is happening in foreign countries?

[forei: Talk about foreign countries]

- A) Often [3]
- B) Sometimes [2]
- C) Seldom [1]
- D) Never [0]
- E) Don't know [8] *Missing*
[9] *Missing*

When you talk about the above subjects (governments, economy, crime, education, religion and foreign affairs), how free do you feel to talk about each of them? Do you feel very free, somewhat free, slightly free or not at all free?

46. How free do you feel to talk about what the city, state or national government is doing? ***[fgov: How free to talk about government]***

- A) Very free [3]
- B) Somewhat free [2]
- C) Slightly free [1]
- D) Not at all free [0]
- E) Don't know [8] *Missing*
[9] *Missing*

47. How free do you feel to talk about how the economy is doing?

[fecon: How free to talk about economy]

- A) Very free [3]
- B) Somewhat free [2]
- C) Slightly free [1]
- D) Not at all free [0]
- E) Don't know [8] *Missing*
[9] *Missing*

48. How free do you feel to talk about crime and violence in society?
[fcrim: How free to talk about crime]

- A) Very free [3]
- B) Somewhat free [2]
- C) Slightly free [1]
- D) Not at all free [0]
- E) Don't know [8] Missing
- [9] Missing

49. How free do you feel to talk about what's going on in schools or education in general? *[fscho: How free to talk about school/education]*

- A) Very free [3]
- B) Somewhat free [2]
- C) Slightly free [1]
- D) Not at all free [0]
- E) Don't know [8] Missing
- [9] Missing

50. How free do you feel to talk about your religion and religious beliefs?
[frelig: How free to talk about religion]

- A) Very free [3]
- B) Somewhat free [2]
- C) Slightly free [1]
- D) Not at all free [0]
- E) Don't know [8] Missing
- [9] Missing

51. How free do you feel to talk about what is happening in foreign countries?
[fforei: How free to talk about foreign countries]

- A) Very free [3]
- B) Somewhat free [2]
- C) Slightly free [1]
- D) Not at all free [0]
- E) Don't know [8] Missing
- [9] Missing

In places where you spend a lot of time, how often do you talk about these subjects? Do you talk about them often, sometimes, seldom or never?

First, think about your own home and the homes of your friends and family.

52. At your own home or the homes of your friends and family, how often do you talk about what the city, state or national government is doing?

[hgov: Home/government]

- | | |
|---------------|--------------------|
| A) Often | <i>[3]</i> |
| B) Sometimes | <i>[2]</i> |
| C) Seldom | <i>[1]</i> |
| D) Never | <i>[0]</i> |
| E) Don't know | <i>[8] Missing</i> |
| | <i>[9] Missing</i> |

53. At your own home or the homes of your friends and family, how often do you talk about how the economy is doing? *[hecon: Home/economy]*

- | | |
|---------------|--------------------|
| A) Often | <i>[3]</i> |
| B) Sometimes | <i>[2]</i> |
| C) Seldom | <i>[1]</i> |
| D) Never | <i>[0]</i> |
| E) Don't know | <i>[8] Missing</i> |
| | <i>[9] Missing</i> |

54. At your own home or the homes of your friends and family, how often do you talk about crime and violence in society? *[hcrim: Home/crime]*

- | | |
|---------------|--------------------|
| A) Don't know | <i>[8] Missing</i> |
| B) Never | <i>[0]</i> |
| C) Seldom | <i>[1]</i> |
| D) Sometimes | <i>[2]</i> |
| E) Often | <i>[3]</i> |
| | <i>[9] Missing</i> |

55. At your own home and the homes of your friends and family, how often do you talk about what's going on in schools or education in general?

[hscho: Home/schoolEducation]

- A) Often [3]
- B) Sometimes [2]
- C) Seldom [1]
- D) Never [0]
- E) Don't know [8] Missing
[9] Missing

56. At your own home and the homes of your friends and family, how often do you talk about your religion and religious beliefs? **[hrel: Home/religion]**

- A) Often [3]
- B) Sometimes [2]
- C) Seldom [1]
- D) Never [0]
- E) Don't know [8] Missing
[9] Missing

57. At your own home and the homes of your friends and family, how often do you talk about what is happening in foreign countries? **[hfore: Home/foreign countries]**

- A) Often [3]
- B) Sometimes [2]
- C) Seldom [1]
- D) Never [0]
- E) Don't know [8] Missing
[9] Missing

58. Are you a member of any clubs or community and civic organizations?

[club: Attend club?]

(Please note that this does NOT include church.)

- A) Yes (Please go to the next question) [1]
- B) No (Please go to Question 65) [0]
[9] Missing

Now, think about meetings of the clubs or community and civic organizations that you attend.

59. At meetings of clubs or community and civic organizations, how often do you talk about what the city, state or national government is doing? [*cgov: Club/government*]

- A) Often [3]
- B) Sometimes [2]
- C) Seldom [1]
- D) Never [0]
- E) Don't know [8] *Missing*
[9] *Missing*

60. At meetings of clubs or community and civic organizations, how often do you talk about how the economy is doing? [*ceco: Club/economy*]

- A) Often [3]
- B) Sometimes [2]
- C) Seldom [1]
- D) Never [0]
- E) Don't know [8] *Missing*
[9] *Missing*

61. At meetings of clubs or community and civic organizations, how often do you talk about crime and violence in society? [*ccrim: Club/crime*]

- A) Often [3]
- B) Sometimes [2]
- C) Seldom [1]
- D) Never [0]
- E) Don't know [8] *Missing*
[9] *Missing*

62. At meetings of clubs or community and civic organizations, how often do you talk about what's going on in schools or education in general? [*cscho: Club/schoolEducation*]

- A) Often [3]
- B) Sometimes [2]
- C) Seldom [1]
- D) Never [0]
- E) Don't know [8] *Missing*
[9] *Missing*

63. At meetings of clubs or community and civic organizations, how often do you talk about your religion and religious beliefs? [*crelig: Club/religion*]

- A) Often [3]
- B) Sometimes [2]
- C) Seldom [1]
- D) Never [0]
- E) Don't know [8] Missing
[9] Missing

64. At meetings of clubs or community and civic organizations, how often do you talk about what is happening in foreign countries? [*cforei: Club/foreign countries*]

- A) Often [3]
- B) Sometimes [2]
- C) Seldom [1]
- D) Never [0]
- E) Don't know [8] Missing
[9] Missing

65. Do you regularly attend religious services (at church, synagogue, temple and so on)? [*areli: Attend religious services?*]

- A) Yes (Please go to the next question) [1]
- B) No (Please go to Question 72) [0]
[9] Missing

Now, think about your place of worship.

66. At your place of worship, how often do you talk about what the city, state or national government is doing? [*rgov: ReligiousServices/government*]

- A) Often [3]
- B) Sometimes [2]
- C) Seldom [1]
- D) Never [0]
- E) Don't know [8] Missing
[9] Missing

67. At your place of worship, how often do you talk about how the economy is doing?
[recon: ReligiousServices/economy]

- A) Often [3]
- B) Sometimes [2]
- C) Seldom [1]
- D) Never [0]
- E) Don't know [8] Missing
[9] Missing

68. At your place of worship, how often do you talk about crime and violence in society?
[rcrim: ReligiousServices/crime]

- A) Often [3]
- B) Sometimes [2]
- C) Seldom [1]
- D) Never [0]
- E) Don't know [8] Missing
[9] Missing

69. At your place of worship, how often do you talk about what's going on in schools or education in general? *[rscho: ReligiousServices/school]*

- A) Often [3]
- B) Sometimes [2]
- C) Seldom [1]
- D) Never [0]
- E) Don't know [8] Missing
[9] Missing

70. At your place of worship, how often do you talk about your religion and religious beliefs? *[rrelig: ReligiousServices/religion]*

- A) Often [3]
- B) Sometimes [2]
- C) Seldom [1]
- D) Never [0]
- E) Don't know [8] Missing
[9] Missing

71. At your place of worship, how often do you talk about what is happening in foreign countries? [*rforei: ReligiousServices/foreign countries*]

- A) Often [3]
- B) Sometimes [2]
- C) Seldom [1]
- D) Never [0]
- E) Don't know [8] Missing
[9] Missing

Now, think about places like shopping malls and restaurants where you are likely to find yourself among both friends and strangers.

72. In places like shopping malls and restaurants, how often do you talk about what the city, state or national government is doing? [*mgov: Mall/government*]

- A) Often [3]
- B) Sometimes [2]
- C) Seldom [1]
- D) Never [0]
- E) Don't know [8] Missing
[9] Missing

73. In places like shopping malls and restaurants, how often do you talk about how the economy is doing? [*meco: Mall/economy*]

- A) Often [3]
- B) Sometimes [2]
- C) Seldom [1]
- D) Never [0]
- E) Don't know [8] Missing
[9] Missing

74. In places like shopping malls and restaurants, how often do you talk about crime and violence in society? [*mcri: Mall/crime*]

- A) Often [3]
- B) Sometimes [2]
- C) Seldom [1]
- D) Never [0]
- E) Don't know [8] Missing
[9] Missing

75. In places like shopping malls and restaurants, how often do you talk about what's going on in schools or education in general? [*msch: Mall/schoolEducation*]

- A) Often [3]
- B) Sometimes [2]
- C) Seldom [1]
- D) Never [0]
- E) Don't know [8] Missing
[9] Missing

76. In places like shopping malls and restaurants, how often do you talk about your religion and religious beliefs? [*mreli: Mall/religion*]

- A) Often [3]
- B) Sometimes [2]
- C) Seldom [1]
- D) Never [0]
- E) Don't know [8] Missing
[9] Missing

77. In places like shopping malls and restaurants, how often do you talk about what is happening in foreign countries? [*mfor: Mall/foreign countries*]

- A) Often [3]
- B) Sometimes [2]
- C) Seldom [1]
- D) Never [0]
- E) Don't know [8] Missing
[9] Missing

78. Do you have a paid job? [*work: Work*]

- A) Yes (Please go to the next question) [1]
- B) No (Please go to Question 85) [0]
[9] Missing

Now, think about the place where you work.

79. At work, how often do you talk about what the city, state or national government is doing? [*wgov: Work/government*]

- A) Often [3]
- B) Sometimes [2]
- C) Seldom [1]
- D) Never [0]
- E) Don't know [8] Missing
[9] Missing

80. At work, how often do you talk about how the economy is doing?

[weco: Work/economy]

- A) Often [3]
- B) Sometimes [2]
- C) Seldom [1]
- D) Never [0]
- E) Don't know [8] *Missing*
[9] *Missing*

81. At work, how often do you talk about crime and violence in society?

[wcric: Walk/crime]

- A) Often [3]
- B) Sometimes [2]
- C) Seldom [1]
- D) Never [0]
- E) Don't know [8] *Missing*
[9] *Missing*

82. At work, how often do you talk about what's going on in schools or education in general? **[wsch: Walk/schooleducation]**

- A) Often [3]
- B) Sometimes [2]
- C) Seldom [1]
- D) Never [0]
- E) Don't know [8] *Missing*
[9] *Missing*

83. At work, how often do you talk about your religion and religious beliefs?

[wreli: Walk/religion]

- A) Often [3]
- B) Sometimes [2]
- C) Seldom [1]
- D) Never [0]
- E) Don't know [8] *Missing*
[9] *Missing*

84. At work, how often do you talk about what is happening in foreign countries?

[wfore: Walk/foreign countries]

- A) Often [3]
- B) Sometimes [2]
- C) Seldom [1]
- D) Never [0]
- E) Don't know [8] Missing
[9] Missing

85. Do you ever use e-mail or participate in chat groups on the Internet or a commercial on-line service such as America On Line, CompuServe or Prodigy?

[email: Email/chat groups]

- A) Yes (Please go to the next question.) [1]
- B) No (Please go to Question 93) [0]
[9] Missing

86. How often do you use e-mail or chat groups? *[eofte: How often/email]*

- A) Daily [4]
- B) A few days each week [3]
- C) A few times each month [2]
- D) Rarely [1]
- E) Don't know/Not applicable [8] Missing
[9] Missing

Now, think about how you use e-mail or chat groups on the Internet or a commercial on-line provider.

87. In e-mail or chat groups, how often do you talk about what the city, state or national government is doing? *[egov: Email/gov't]*

- A) Often [3]
- B) Sometimes [2]
- C) Seldom [1]
- D) Never [0]
- E) Don't know [8] Missing
[9] Missing

88. In e-mail or chat groups, how often do you talk about how the economy is doing?
[eeco: Email/economy]

- A) Often [3]
- B) Sometimes [2]
- C) Seldom [1]
- D) Never [0]
- E) Don't know [8] Missing
[9] Missing

89. In e-mail or chat groups, how often do you talk about crime and violence in society?
[ecrim: Email/crime]

- A) Often [3]
- B) Sometimes [2]
- C) Seldom [1]
- D) Never [0]
- E) Don't know [8] Missing
[9] Missing

90. In e-mail or chat groups, how often do you talk about what's going on in schools or education in general? *[esch: Email/schooleducation]*

- A) Often [3]
- B) Sometimes [2]
- C) Seldom [1]
- D) Never [0]
- E) Don't know [8] Missing
[9] Missing

91. In e-mail or chat groups, how often do you talk about your religion and religious beliefs? *[ereli: Email/religion]*

- A) Often [3]
- B) Sometimes [2]
- C) Seldom [1]
- D) Never [0]
- E) Don't know [8] Missing
[9] Missing

92. In e-mail or chat groups, how often do you talk about what is happening in foreign countries? [*efore: Email/foreign countries*]

- A) Often [3]
- B) Sometimes [2]
- C) Seldom [1]
- D) Never [0]
- E) Don't know [8] *Missing*
[9] *Missing*

93. Are you a _____? [*gend: Gender*]

- A) Female [1]
- B) Male [2]
- [9] *Missing*

94. What is your ethnic background? [*ethni: Ethnic background*]

- A) Asian [1]
- B) African American [2]
- C) Hispanic (Latino) [3]
- D) White [4]
- E) Other [5]
- [9] *Missing*

APPENDIX 4: KIDS VOTING 2000 STUDENT SURVEY QUESTIONS

Kids Voting Western New York

2000 Student Survey

Thank You

Kids Voting Western New York and the University at Buffalo would like to thank you in advance for completing this survey questionnaire. Your answers will help us understand how well the Kids Voting program is doing. Just as importantly, your answers will help us improve it. All of the survey questions must be answered using the “bubble” answer sheet.

Please note that this is NOT a test. There are no right or wrong answers. Please feel free to check any answer that applies.

Instructions

(Please read fully through the instructions below before starting.)

- 1) Do NOT complete the Name section either on the back of the bubble answer sheet or by writing your name on the front. This is an “anonymous” survey.
- 2) Please do not write on the questionnaire form.
- 3) When you are done, please hand in this instruction sheet, the questionnaire and the bubble answer sheet to your teacher.
- 4) You may now start the questionnaire with Question 1.



Kids Voting Western New York – 2000 Student Survey

1. Did you register to vote for Kids Voting? [kvreg: KV registered]

- A) Yes [1]
- B) No [0]
- [9] Missing

2. Did you vote in the Kids Voting election? [kvvote: KV voted]

- A) Yes [1]
- B) No [0]
- [9] Missing

3. Did you like voting? [likev: Liked voting]

- A) Yes [1]
- B) No [0]
- [9] Missing

4. Do you think it is important to vote? [impo: Important to vote]

- A) Yes [1]
- B) No [0]
- [9] Missing

5. Would you like to vote next year? [votnx: Would vote next year]

- A) Yes [1]
- B) No [0]
- [9] Missing

6. Did you have fun with Kids Voting? [fun: Had fun with KV]

- A) Yes [1]
- B) No [0]
- [9] Missing

7. How much did you participate in the Kids Voting activities in your school?
[kvpar: KV participation]

- A) A lot [3]
- B) Some [2]
- C) Not much [1]
- D) None [0]
- [9] Missing

8. Have you ever voted in school to elect any of the following?

[schel: School election]

- A) US President [1]
 - B) A Member of the US Congress (House of Representative or Senate) [2]
 - C) State, County or Local Official [3]
 - D) Other (Issues, Not school related offices) [4]
 - E) Have never voted [5]
- [9] Missing

9. If you are old enough to vote in an adult election, have you registered to vote?

[regist: Registered to vote]

- A) Yes [1]
 - B) No [2]
 - C) Not applicable [8] Missing
- [9] Missing

10. Some people seem to follow what's going on in government and public affairs most of the time, whether there's an election going on or not. Others aren't that interested. Would you say you follow what's going on in government and current events most of the time, some of the time, only now and then, or hardly at all?

[effic1: Follow current events]

- A) Hardly at all [1]
 - B) Only now and then [2]
 - C) Some of the time [3]
 - D) Most of the time [4]
 - E) Don't know [8]
- [9] Missing

11. How much of the time do you think you can trust the government in Washington to do what is right? **[effic2: Trust]**

- A) Just about always [3]
 - B) Most of the time [2]
 - C) Some of the time [1]
 - D) No opinion [7] Missing
 - E) Don't know [8] Missing
- [9] Missing

Please tell us how much you agree or disagree with these statements:

12. "I don't think that elected government leaders care much what people like me or my parents think." Do you: [effic3: Government leaders care]

- A) Agree [0]
- B) Disagree [2]
- C) Neither agree nor disagree [1]
- D) It depends [7] Missing
- E) Don't know [8] Missing

13. "Sometimes politics and government seem so complicated a person like me can't really understand what is going on." Do you: [effic4: Politics too complicated]

- A) Agree [0]
- B) Disagree [2]
- C) Neither agree nor disagree [1]
- D) It depends [7] Missing
- E) Don't know [8] Missing

14. Do you think that quite a few of the people running the government are dishonest, not very many are, or do you think hardly any of them are dishonest? [effic5: Dishonest]

- A) Quite a few are dishonest [1]
- B) Not very many are dishonest [2]
- C) Hardly any are dishonest [3]
- D) No opinion [7] Missing
- E) Don't know [8] Missing

15. Do you think that people in government waste a lot of money we pay in taxes, waste some of it, or don't waste very much of it? [effic6: Waste money]

- A) A lot [1]
- B) Some [2]
- C) Not very much [3]
- D) No opinion [7] Missing
- E) Don't know [8] Missing

16. How much do you feel that having elections makes the government pay attention to what the people think? **[effic7: Government pays attention]**

- A) A good deal [3]
- B) Some [2]
- C) Not much [1]
- D) It depends [7]
- E) Don't know [8]
- [9] Missing

17. Over the years, how much attention do you feel the government pays to what the people think when it decides what to do—a good deal, some, or not much? **[effic8: Government pays attention]**

- A) A good deal [3]
- B) Some [2]
- C) Not much [1]
- D) It depends [7] Missing
- E) Don't know [8] Missing
- [9] Missing

18. How much of the time do you think you can trust the media to report the news fairly? Just about always, most of the time, only some of the time, or almost never? **[trustm: Trust the media]**

- A) Just about always [3]
- B) Most of the time [2]
- C) Only some of the time [1]
- D) Almost never [0]
- E) Don't know [8] Missing
- [9] Missing

19. What is President Clinton's political party? **[clinto: Clinton's party ID]**

- A) Republican [1]
- B) Democrat [2]
- C) Reform [3]
- D) Other [4]
- E) Don't know [5]
- [9] Missing

20. Generally speaking, do you usually think of yourself as a Republican, a Democrat, an Independent, or what? **[partyi: Party ID]**

- A) Republican [1]
- B) Democrat [2]
- C) Independent [3]
- D) Other [4]
- E) None [5]
- [9] Missing

21. If you consider yourself a Democrat or a Republican, how strongly do you feel? **[stren: Strength of party ID]**

- A) Strongly [2]
- B) Not very strongly [1]
- C) Don't know [8]
- [9] Missing

22. Generally speaking, does your mother (or female legal guardian) usually think of herself as a Republican, a Democrat, an Independent, or what? **[mpid: Mother's party ID]**

- A) Republican [1]
- B) Democrat [2]
- C) Independent [3]
- D) None [4]
- E) Don't know [5]
- [9] Missing

23. Did your mother (or female legal guardian) vote in the election held early in November? **[mvot: Mother voted]**

- A) Yes [1]
- B) No [0]
- C) Don't know [8] Missing
- [9] Missing

24. Generally speaking, does your father (or male legal guardian) usually think of himself as a Republican, a Democrat, an Independent, or what?

[fpid: Father's party ID]

- | | |
|----------------|--------------------|
| A) Republican | [1] |
| B) Democrat | [2] |
| C) Independent | [3] |
| D) None | [4] |
| E) Don't know | [5] |
| | [9] Missing |

25. Did your father (or male legal guardian) vote in the election held early in November?

[fvote: Father voted]

- | | |
|---------------|--------------------|
| A) Yes | [1] |
| B) No | [0] |
| C) Don't know | [8] Missing |
| | [9] Missing |

26. Generally speaking, would you say that you personally care a good deal which party wins a Presidential election, or don't you care very much which party wins?

[win: Which party wins]

- | | |
|---------------------|--------------------|
| A) Don't know | [8] Missing |
| B) Don't care | [0] |
| C) Care a good deal | [1] |
| | [9] Missing |

27. Generally speaking, who do you think has the most influence over your own political view? **[influe: Political influence]**

- | | |
|-------------------------------|--------------------|
| A) Parents or other relatives | [1] |
| B) Teachers | [2] |
| C) Friends | [3] |
| D) People in the media | [4] |
| E) Others | [5] |
| | [9] Missing |

Now, we are going to ask you some political participation questions. Please tell me whether you have used any of the following forms of expression:

28. Have you ever written a letter to a newspaper, magazine or television news program?
[letter: Write letters to the media]

- | | |
|-------------------|-------------|
| A) Yes | [1] |
| B) No | [0] |
| C) Don't remember | [8] Missing |
| | [9] Missing |

29. Have you ever called in to a radio or television talk show?
[callin: Call in talk shows]

- | | |
|-------------------|-------------|
| A) Yes | [1] |
| B) No | [0] |
| C) Don't remember | [8] Missing |
| | [9] Missing |

30. Have you ever written a letter to, phoned or otherwise contacted a candidate for public office or an elected official? **[conta: Contact elected officials]**

- | | |
|-------------------|-------------|
| A) Yes | [1] |
| B) No | [0] |
| C) Don't remember | [8] Missing |
| | [9] Missing |

31. Have you ever attended a public meeting of an organization interested in public affairs? **[meeti: Attend public meetings]**

- | | |
|-------------------|-------------|
| A) Yes | [1] |
| B) No | [0] |
| C) Don't remember | [8] Missing |
| | [9] Missing |

32. Have you ever spoken out at a public meeting of an organization interested in public affairs? **[spok: Spoken out]**

- | | |
|-------------------|-------------|
| A) Yes | [1] |
| B) No | [0] |
| C) Don't remember | [8] Missing |
| | [9] Missing |

33. Have you ever taken part in a public demonstration or march?

[marc: Demonstration/March]

- | | |
|-------------------|-------------|
| A) Yes | [1] |
| B) No | [0] |
| C) Don't remember | [8] Missing |
| | [9] Missing |

34. Have you ever worked in a political campaign?

[camp: Worked in political campaign]

- | | |
|-------------------|-------------|
| A) Yes | [1] |
| B) No | [0] |
| C) Don't remember | [8] Missing |
| | [9] Missing |

Now, we are interested in finding out how much information you got from the media regarding this year's election.

35. How much information did you get from newspapers about the election?

[papers: Info from papers]

- | | |
|-------------|-------------|
| A) A lot | [3] |
| B) Some | [2] |
| C) A little | [1] |
| D) None | [0] |
| | [9] Missing |

36. How much information did you get from television about the election?

[tv: Info from TV]

- | | |
|-------------|-------------|
| A) A lot | [3] |
| B) Some | [2] |
| C) A little | [1] |
| D) None | [0] |
| | [9] Missing |

37. How much information did you get from radio about the election?

[radio: Info from radio]

- | | |
|-------------|-------------|
| A) A lot | [3] |
| B) Some | [2] |
| C) A little | [1] |
| D) None | [0] |
| | [9] Missing |

38. How much information did you get from magazines about the election?

[maga: Info from magazines]

- A) A lot [3]
- B) Some [2]
- C) A little [1]
- D) None [0]
- [9] Missing

39. How much information did you get from the Internet (computers) about the election?

[inter: Info from the Internet]

- A) A lot [3]
- B) Some [2]
- C) A little [1]
- D) None [0]
- [9] Missing

40. On average, how much time a day do you spend browsing the Internet?

[brow: Browsing the Internet]

- A) A lot [3]
- B) Some [2]
- C) A little [1]
- D) None [0]
- [9] Missing

41. Do you ever use e-mail or participate in chat groups on the Internet or a commercial on-line service such as America On Line, CompuServe or Prodigy?

[email: Email/chat groups]

- A) Yes (Please continue to Question #42.) [1]
- B) No (Please skip to Question #44) [0]
- [9] Missing

42. How often do you use e-mail or chat groups? **[eoft: How often/email]**

- A) Daily [4]
- B) A few days each week [3]
- C) A few times each month [2]
- D) Rarely [1]
- E) Don't know/Not applicable [8] Missing
- [9] Missing

43. How often did you talk about the recent election campaigns using e-mail or chat groups? [talkeec: Talk about the election using e-mail]

- A) Often [3]
- B) Sometimes [2]
- C) Seldom [1]
- D) Never [0]
- E) Don't know [8]
- [9] Missing

Now we would like to know a little about discussions you may have had concerning politics and the elections.

44. How often do you talk about political issues and campaigns with your parents and others in your family? [talkp: Talk with parents]

- A) Often [3]
- B) Sometimes [2]
- C) Seldom [1]
- D) Never [0]
- E) Don't know [8]
- [9] Missing

45. When political issues and campaigns are discussed in your family, is it something you usually bring up, or does someone else in your family usually bring it up? [talkih: Initiated discussion at home]

- A) I bring it up. [2]
- B) Someone else in my family brings it up. [1]
- C) Don't know [8] Missing
- [9] Missing

46. How often do you talk about political issues and campaigns with your friends? [talkf: Talk with friends]

- A) Often [3]
- B) Sometimes [2]
- C) Seldom [1]
- D) Never [0]
- E) Don't know [8] Missing
- [9] Missing

47. When political issues and campaigns are discussed with your friends, is it something you usually bring up, or do your friends usually bring it up?
[talkif: Initiated discussion with friends]

- A) I bring it up. [2]
- B) My friends usually bring it up. [1]
- C) Don't know [8] Missing
[9] Missing

48. During the recent election campaign, how often did you talk with people whose ideas or candidate preferences were different than yours?
[talko: Talk with people you opposed]

- A) Often [3]
- B) Sometimes [2]
- C) Seldom [1]
- D) Never [0]
- E) Don't know [8] Missing
[9] Missing

49. During the recent election campaign, did you try to talk anyone into being for a candidate you liked? [talkc: Talk somebody into being with a candidate you like]

- A) Yes [1]
- B) No [0]
- C) Don't know [8] Missing
[9] Missing

Now we like to know a little about your activities at school.

50. Do you participate in student government at school?
[stugov: Participate in student government]

- A) Yes [1]
- B) No [0]
- C) Don't know [8] Missing
[9] Missing

51. Do you participate in any activities at your school outside of class (extra-curricular activities)? [extrac: Participate in extra-curricula activities]

- A) Yes [1]
- B) No [0]
- C) Don't know [8] Missing
[9] Missing

52. Were you able to do any volunteer work in the last twelve months, by contributing your free time to a community group or social service?

[volun: Participate in volunteer work]

- A) Yes [1]
- B) No [0]
- C) Don't know [8]
- [9] Missing

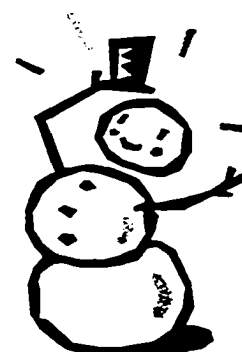
53. Are you a _____? [Gend: Gender]

- C) Female [1]
- D) Male [2]
- [9] Missing

54. What is your ethnic background? [ethni: Ethnic background]

- F) Asian [1]
- G) African American [2]
- H) Hispanic (Latino) [3]
- I) White [4]
- J) Other [5]
- [9] Missing

(Please hand in the questionnaire and the bubble answer sheet to your teacher. Thanks!)



Thanks again for helping with this survey!

APPENDIX 5: 1997 KIDS VOTING COMMUNITY SURVEY QUESTIONS

Kids Voting USA – Erie County – 1997

Q1. Thinking about all the elections you've been able to vote in, would you say you've voted in? ...(READ RESPONSES)... [vote: Vote]

1. Virtually all of them [3]
2. Most of them [2]
3. Only a few [1]
4. Don't know (Do not read) [8]
5. Refused (Do not read) [9]

Q2. Do you recall hearing about a program during this election here in Erie County where school children could go to the polls with their parents?

[aware: Aware of Kids Voting]

1. Yes [1]
2. No [0]
3. Don't know (Do not read) [8]
4. Refused (Do not read) [9]

Q3. Either from your own experience or from what you've heard, is your overall impression of Kids Voting? ...(Read responses)... [impressi: Favorable impression]

1. Very favorable [4]
2. Favorable [3]
3. Unfavorable [2]
4. Very unfavorable [1]
5. Don't know (Do not read) [8]
6. Refused (Do not read) [9]

Q4. As you know, many people decided not to vote in this election. How important was the Kids Voting Program in your decision to vote? ...(Read responses)...

[decision: Decision to vote]

1. Very important [4]
2. Somewhat important [3]
3. Not very important [2]
4. Not at all important [1]
5. Don't know (Do not read) [8]
6. Refused (Do not read) [9]

[IF THE ANSWER IS 4-6, THEN SKIP TO QUESTION 6]

Q5. Would you say the Kids Voting Program was the determining factor in your decision to vote? That is, would you probably not have voted except for the Kids Voting Program? [**determin: Determining factor**]

1. Yes [1]
2. No [0]
3. Don't know (Do not read) [9]
4. Refused (Do not read) [9]

Q6. Do you have children in grades K thru 12? [**grade: Grade level**]

1. Yes [1]
2. No [0]
3. Don't know (Do not read) [8]
4. Refused (Do not read) [9]

[IF THE ANSWER IS NOT 1, THEN SKIP TO QUESTION 10]

Q7. Were your kids in a school that had the Kids Voting Program? [**kvprogra: Kids Voting program**]

1. Yes [1]
2. No [0]
3. Don't know (Do not read) [9]
4. Refused (Do not read) [9]

Q8. Did any of your children ask you questions or initiate discussions about candidates or issues while this years election was going on? [**ask: Ask questions**]

1. Yes [1]
2. No [0]
3. Don't know (Do not read) [9]
4. Refused (Do not read) [9]

Q9. Were your children able to go to the polls with you on election day? [**accompany: Children accompany**]

1. Yes [1]
2. No [0]
3. Don't know (Do not read) [8]
4. Refused (Do not read) [9]

Q10. Now, just a few questions about you for statistical purposes. Do you subscribe to or read the Buffalo News on a daily basis? [**buffnews: Read Buffalo News**]

1. Yes [1]
2. No [2]
3. Don't Know (Do not read) [8]
4. Refused (Do not read) [9]

Q11. Politically speaking, would you say you follow what goes on in politics? ...(Read responses)... [**followpo: Follow politics**]

1. Very closely [4]
2. Somewhat closely [3]
3. Not very closely [2]
4. Not at all [1]
5. Don't know (Do not read) [8]
6. Refused (Do not read) [9]

Q12. Which of these categories include your race or ethnicity? ...(Read responses)... [**race: Ethnicity**]

1. White or Anglo [1]
2. Black or African American [2]
3. Hispanic or Latino [3]
4. Asian [4]
5. Other (RECORD) (Do not read) [5]
6. Don't know (Do not read) [6]
7. Refused (Do not read) [7]

[IF THE ANSWER IS NOT 5, THEN SKIP TO QUESTION 14]

Q13. Record "OTHER"

Q14. How many years of formal education have you completed? ...(Read responses)... [**edu: Education**]

1. High school or less [1]
2. Some college or trade school [2]
3. Graduate from a college or university [3]
4. Don't know [8]
5. Refused [9]

Q15. What political party are you registered with? **[party: Political party]**

- 1. Republican [1]
- 2. Democrat [2]
- 3. Independent [3]
- 4. Blank (NO party affiliation) [4]
- 5. Other party (Do not read) [5]
- 6. Don't know [6]
- 7. Refused [7]

Q16. In what year were you born? (Record 2 digits)

Year born 19XX

Q17. On average how many hours a day do you spend:

- Watching Television..... **[tv: Television]**
- Talking on the Telephone..... **[phone: Telephone]**
- Listening to the Radio..... **[radio: Radio]**
- Reading Mail..... **[mail: Reading mail]**
- Reading Newspapers..... **[papers: Newspaper]**
- Reading Books or Magazines..... **[books: Books/Magazines]**
- Reading Email..... **[email: Email]**
- Browsing the Internet..... **[net: Internet]**

Q18. Internet hours multiple response table.

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- 6
- 7
- 8
- 9
- 10
- 11
- 12
- 13
- 14
- 15
- 16
- 17
- 18
- 19
- 20
- 21
- 22
- 23
- 24

[IF THE ANSWER TO QUESTION 18 IS 0, THEN SKIP TO QUESTION 20]

Q19. Have you used the Internet to obtain political information in making your voting decision? [netinfo: Internet/Political info]

- 1. Yes [1]
- 2. No [0]
- 3. Don't know [8]
- 4. Refused [9]

Q20. Thank you very much for your time. Good bye. CODE GENDER.

- 1. Male [1]
- 2. Female [2]

Q21. Code MCI#:

MCI#

APPENDIX 6: 1998 KIDS VOTING COMMUNITY SURVEY QUESTIONS

Kids Voting USA 1998 – Erie County

Q1. Thinking about all the elections you've been able to vote in, would you say you've voted in? ...(READ RESPONSES)... [votein: Elections voted in]

- | | |
|-----------------------------|-----|
| 6. Virtually all of them | [3] |
| 7. Most of them | [2] |
| 8. Only a few | [1] |
| 9. Don't know (Do not read) | [8] |
| 10. Refused (Do not read) | [9] |

Q2. Do you recall hearing about a program during this election here in Erie County where school children could go to the polls with their parents?

[aware: Awareness of KVVWNY]

- | | |
|-----------------------------|-----|
| 1. Yes | [1] |
| 5. No | [0] |
| 6. Don't know (Do not read) | [8] |
| 7. Refused (Do not read) | [9] |

Q3. Either from your own experience or from what you've heard, is your overall impression of Kids Voting? ...(Read responses)... [impress: Impression of KVVWNY]

- | | |
|------------------------------|-----|
| 7. Very favorable | [4] |
| 8. Favorable | [3] |
| 9. Unfavorable | [2] |
| 10. Very unfavorable | [1] |
| 11. Don't know (Do not read) | [8] |
| 12. Refused (Do not read) | [9] |

Q4. As you know, many people decided not to vote in this election. How important was the Kids Voting Program in your decision to vote? ...(Read responses)...

[import: Importance]

- | | |
|------------------------------|-----|
| 7. Very important | [4] |
| 8. Somewhat important | [3] |
| 9. Not very important | [2] |
| 10. Not at all important | [1] |
| 11. Don't know (Do not read) | [8] |
| 12. Refused (Do not read) | [9] |

[IF THE ANSWER IS 4-6, THEN SKIP TO QUESTION 6]

Q5. Would you say the Kids Voting Program was the determining factor in your decision to vote? That is, would you probably not have voted except for the Kids Voting Program? [determ: Determining factor]

- 5. Yes [1]
- 6. No [0]
- 7. Don't know (Do not read) [8]
- 8. Refused (Do not read) [9]

Q6. Do you have children in grades K thru 12? [k12: Have children in K – 12]

- 5. Yes [1]
- 6. No [0]
- 7. Don't know (Do not read) [8]
- 8. Refused (Do not read) [9]

[IF THE ANSWER IS NOT 1, THEN SKIP TO QUESTION 11]

Q7. Were your kids in a school that had the Kids Voting Program?
[program: Participating school]

- 5. Yes [1]
- 6. No [0]
- 7. Don't know (Do not read) [8]
- 8. Refused (Do not read) [9]

Q8. Did any of your children ask you questions or initiate discussions about candidates or issues while this years election was going on? [ask: Children ask questions]

- 5. Yes [1]
- 6. No [0]
- 7. Don't know (Do not read) [9]
- 8. Refused (Do not read) [9]

Q9. Did you talk in your home about political candidates and issues with your spouse, other family members, or friends? [talk: Talk about politics]

- 1. Yes [1]
- 2. No [0]
- 3. Don't know (Do not read) [9]
- 4. Refused (Do not read) [9]

Q10. Were your children able to go to the polls with you on election day?
[cvote: Brought children to poll]

- | | |
|-----------------------------|-----|
| 5. Yes | [1] |
| 6. No | [0] |
| 7. Don't know (Do not read) | [9] |
| 8. Refused (Do not read) | [9] |

Q11. The last few questions we use for statistical purposes only. First, do you subscribe to or read the Buffalo News on a daily basis? [buffnews: Read Buffalo News]

- | | |
|-----------------------------|-----|
| 5. Yes | [1] |
| 6. No | [0] |
| 7. Don't Know (Do not read) | [8] |
| 8. Refused (Do not read) | [9] |

Q12. Politically speaking, would you say you follow what goes on in politics? ...(Read responses)... [politics: Follow politics]

- | | |
|------------------------------|-----|
| 7. Very closely | [4] |
| 8. Somewhat closely | [3] |
| 9. Not very closely | [2] |
| 10. Not at all | [1] |
| 11. Don't know (Do not read) | [8] |
| 12. Refused (Do not read) | [9] |

Q13. Is your ethnicity....? (Read responses) [race: Ethnicity]

- | | |
|----------------------------------|-----|
| 8. White or Anglo | [1] |
| 9. Black or African American | [2] |
| 10. Hispanic or Latino | [3] |
| 11. Asian | [4] |
| 12. Other (RECORD) (Do not read) | [5] |
| 13. Don't know (Do not read) | [6] |
| 14. Refused (Do not read) | [7] |

[IF THE ANSWER IS NOT 5, THEN SKIP TO QUESTION 14]

Q14. RECORD OTHER:

Q15. How many years of formal education have you completed? (Read responses)
[edu: Education]

- | | |
|-----------------------------|-------------|
| 6. Less Than High School | [1] |
| 7. H.S. Grad (GED) | [2] |
| 8. Some College/Tech School | [3] |
| 9. 4 Year College | [4] |
| 10. Graduate Degree | [5] |
| 11. Don't know | [6] Missing |
| 12. Refused | [7] Missing |

Q16. With which political party are you registered? [partyid: Political party]

- | | |
|----------------------------------|-----|
| 8. Republican | [1] |
| 9. Democrat | [2] |
| 10. Independent | [3] |
| 11. Blank (NO party affiliation) | [4] |
| 12. Other party (Do not read) | [5] |
| 13. Don't know | [6] |
| 14. Refused | [7] |

Q17. In what year were you born? (Record 2 digits) [yearborn: Year Born]

Year born 19XX_____

Q18. On average how many hours a day do you spend:

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Watching Television....._____ | [tv: Television] |
| Talking on the Telephone....._____ | [phone: Telephone] |
| Listening to the Radio....._____ | [radio: Radio] |
| Reading Mail....._____ | [mail: Reading mail] |
| Reading Newspapers....._____ | [papers: Newspaper] |
| Reading Books or Magazines....._____ | [books: Books/Magazines] |
| Reading Email....._____ | [email: Email] |
| Browsing the Internet....._____ | [net: Internet] |

Q19. Have you used the Internet to obtain political information in making your voting decision? [pnet: Using the Internet for political info]

- | | |
|-----------------------------|-----|
| 1. Yes | [1] |
| 2. No | [0] |
| 3. Don't know (Do not read) | [8] |
| 4. Refused (Do not read) | [9] |

[IF THE ANSWER TO QUESTION 19 IS NOT 1, THEN SKIP TO QUESTION 21]

Q20. Would you say this information was VERY, SOMEWHAT, NOT VERY, or NOT AT ALL HELPFUL to you? [netinfo: Helpfulness of net info]

- | | |
|-----------------------------|-----|
| 1. Very Helpful | [4] |
| 2. Somewhat Helpful | [3] |
| 3. Not Very Helpful | [2] |
| 4. Not At All Helpful | [1] |
| 5. Don't know (Do not read) | [9] |
| 6. Refused (Do not read) | [9] |

**Q21. Thank you very much for your time. Have a good day. (CODE GENDER)
[gender: Gender]**

- | | |
|-----------|-----|
| 1. Male | [1] |
| 2. Female | [2] |

Q22. Code MCI#

MCI#

Q23. Time of Survey:

Minutes

Seconds.....

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