

## Section 3: Community satisfaction

# How satisfied are Minnesotans with their community's efforts in youth programming?

Topics covered in this section:

**Community satisfaction**  
**Program options**

**C**ommunities are the settings in which the majority of community learning opportunities take place. National research suggests that the supply of high quality programs for youth is not distributed equally across communities.<sup>9</sup> Community capacity to provide the variety of opportunities youth find interesting is mixed across communities.

In-depth research studies also reveal that low income neighborhoods, both urban and rural, are the least likely to offer consistent support and a wide array of developmental opportunities for adolescents. Contrasting community resources available for youth ages 11 to 14 in low income neighborhoods in Chicago with a wealthier suburban community, one study found striking differences not only in the number but also the types of programs most prevalent in respective types of communities. Results suggest among other things, that suburban communities offered a larger and richer array of choices emphasizing educational enrichment, while inner city programs more often focused on academic remediation and personal support.<sup>10</sup>

This section explores parents' perceptions about how well their community is doing in providing opportunities for youth as well as the adequacy of what is available.

## How well are communities at providing programs and activities for teenagers?

Only one in four (25%) Minnesota parents believes their community is doing very well providing programs for youth. About half believe their communities are doing “OK” with one in four reporting their community is not doing very well. Parents in suburban communities are somewhat more likely to rate their community as doing very well (36%) and parents in urban communities as not doing very well (40%). One in three parents in rural areas, small towns and urban metro communities think their communities are not doing very well in providing programs for youth compared with only one in five in the suburbs and cities around greater Minnesota. The greatest differences, however, are by income level, where a majority of low income families feel their communities are not doing very well—more than

twice the rate of parents with incomes over \$75,000. Hispanic and non-white parents have the lowest levels of satisfaction with their communities’ provision of programs for teenagers.

### A closer look

**State results:** About half of Minnesota parents report their community is doing OK providing activities for youth, while only a quarter believe their community is doing very well and another quarter report they are not doing very well. These findings parallel national results for this same question.

**Community type:** Comparing parent responses about how well their community is doing by the type of community in which they live, suburban communities received the highest rating with 36% indicating

their community was doing very well. Urban parents had the highest percentage indicating their community was not doing very well (40%) followed by small towns (34%) and rural areas (32%).

**Family economic status:** Over half (52%) of parents in the lowest income group indicated their community is not doing very well providing opportunities for teenagers. There is a 31% difference between the lowest income level and the highest level. The percentage of parents reporting that their community is doing very well increases with income levels from 8% at the lowest income level to 40% at the highest income bracket.

**Race/ethnicity:** When comparing parent opinions about how well their community is doing by

race and immigrant status, about 50% of parents of all backgrounds report their communities are doing an OK job. Also about equal percentages of white and immigrant parents report their communities do very well and not very well. However, for non-white or Hispanic parents, very few felt their community is doing very well (8%) and 41% report their community is not doing very well. ■

*Lower income parents and those living in rural areas, small towns, and the cities of Minneapolis and Saint Paul are less satisfied with their community’s supply of youth programs.*

### Question:

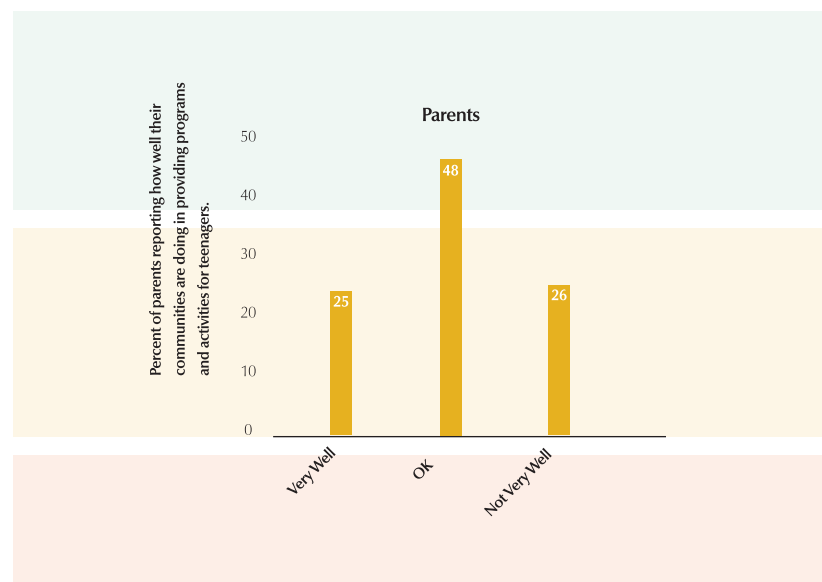
How well is your community doing in providing programs and activities for teenagers?

(Survey question for parents)\*

- Very well
- OK
- Not very well

\* based on survey question P25

### Minnesota results:



### Minnesota breakdown:

		Very well	Ok	Not very well
<b>Community Type</b>	Rural	19%	50%	32%
	Small Town	15%	52%	34%
	City in Greater Minnesota	23%	55%	21%
	Suburban Metro	36%	45%	20%
	Urban Metro	15%	45%	40%
<b>Family Economic Status</b>	Less than \$25,000	8%	40%	52%
	\$25,000 to \$50,000	16%	54%	30%
	\$50,000 to \$75,000	19%	53%	28%
	\$75,000 to \$100,000	29%	53%	19%
	\$100,000 or more	40%	39%	21%
<b>Race/Ethnicity</b>	White	27%	48%	25%
	Non-white	8%	51%	41%
	Immigrant	24%	53%	23%

## How do parents and youth rate the options available in their community?

A majority of all Minnesota parents and six out of ten youth believe there are enough program options. About one-third of parents and youth report there needs to be more options; significantly fewer believe there are too many. Responses to this question show gaps in availability of programs in small towns, urban and rural areas. However, the most dramatic gaps in perceived program availability are for parents with less than \$50,000 incomes, a clear majority of whom reported the need for more programs. Only about one-quarter of parents in the highest income bracket think more programs are needed. Similar discrepancies exist by racial and ethnic background where the proportion of Hispanic and non-white parents reporting a need for more program options is almost twice that of white parents.

### A closer look

**State results:** Fifty-five percent of Minnesota parents feel there are enough program options for young people in their communities, compared to 61% of youth who share this belief. Thirty-eight percent of parents and 32% of youth feel there should be more options. Only 7% of parents and a similarly small percentage of youth feel there are too many options.

**Community type:** Across community types, parents report the need for more options most often in small towns (49%), followed by urban (47%) and rural (44%) areas, and cities in greater Minnesota (40%). This is in sharp contrast to parents from suburban areas where only 28% report the need for more programs. The results for youth in these areas show a similar pattern (but smaller percentages).

**Family economic status:** The need for more program options is greatest for low income parents, with 65% reporting that more options are needed. This percentage decreases incrementally as income levels rise—down to only 26% for the highest income level. Similarly, the highest percentage of youth reporting the need for more programs is at the lowest income level (40%). Paralleling parent responses, youth indicating the need for program options decreases as income rises, down to 23% for those in the highest income level.

**Race/ethnicity:** Hispanic and non-white parents have the highest percentage reporting the need for more program options (65%), followed by immigrant parents (48%), and only 35% of white parents. By comparison, immigrant youth have the highest percent

indicating the need for more program options at 42%, followed by Hispanic or non-white youth at 39% and 30% of white youth. ■

*More parents than youth feel they have enough program options. Satisfaction with program options increases with income for both youth and parents.*

### Question:

#### How do you feel about the amount of program options offered in your community?

(Survey question for parents and youth)\*

#### Parents?

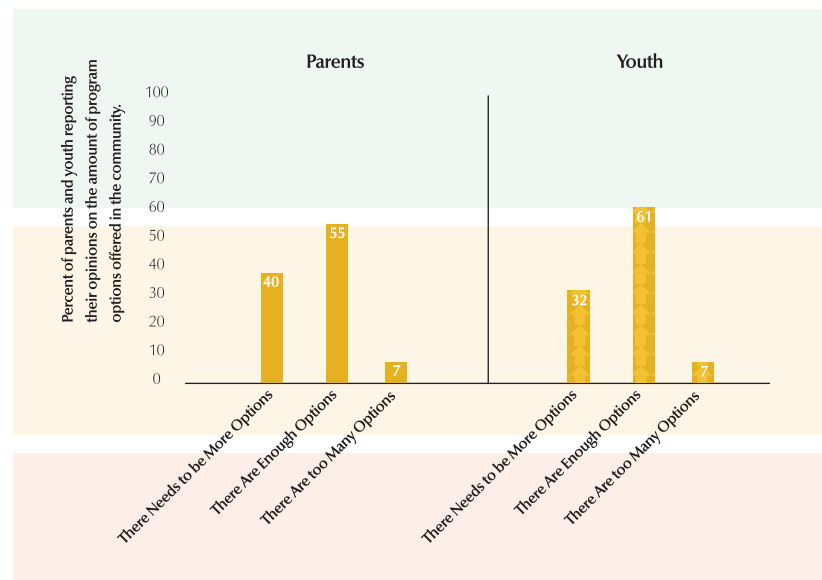
- There needs to be more options
- There are enough options
- There are too many options

#### Youth?

- There needs to be more options
- There are enough options
- There are too many options

\* based on survey questions P14 and Y15

### Minnesota results:



### Minnesota breakdown:

Community Type	Parents (%)	Youth (%)	There needs to be more options			There are enough options			There are too many options		
			Parents (%)	Youth (%)	Parents (%)	Youth (%)	Parents (%)	Youth (%)			
Community Type	Rural	44%	36%	52%	3%	5%					
	Small Town	49%	37%	47%	55%	4%	8%				
	City in Greater Minnesota	40%	32%	51%	61%	8%	7%				
	Suburban Metro	28%	20%	64%	73%	8%	7%				
	Urban Metro	47%	35%	45%	59%	8%	6%				
Family Economic Status	Less than \$25,000	65%	40%	25%	53%	10%	7%				
	\$25,000 to \$50,000	52%	35%	45%	60%	4%	5%				
	\$50,000 to \$75,000	40%	36%	52%	57%	7%	7%				
	\$75,000 to \$100,000	28%	25%	63%	70%	9%	5%				
	\$100,000 or more	26%	23%	68%	69%	6%	8%				
Race/Ethnicity	White	35%	30%	59%	64%	7%	6%				
	Non-white	65%	39%	32%	54%	3%	9%				
	Immigrant	48%	42%	40%	52%	12%	6%				