



For Immediate Release
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New Census Data Confirm Increase in Youth Voter Turnout In 2008 Election

Youth Voter Turnout Rate Rose to 51.1 Percent, Third Highest Rate Ever
2 Million More Young People Voted Than in 2004

State-by-State Data Available at www.civicyouth.org
Youth Voter Experts Available for Interviews, Call Contact

Tisch College, Tufts University -- Nearly two million more young Americans under the age of 30 voted in the 2008 presidential elections as compared to the 2004 elections, according to new Census data analyzed and released by the Center for Information and Research on Civic Learning and Engagement (CIRCLE) at Tufts University's Tisch College.

The increase is a continuation of the trend observed in the 2004 and 2006 elections. Youth turnout was 11 percentage points higher than in 1996, which was the low point after decades of decline. While young people increased their turnout significantly in 2008, older adults voted at lower rates than in 2004 and only slightly above their 2000 level.

Although overall youth turnout was high in the 2008 presidential election, there were important differences in turnout rates. Young African Americans posted the highest turnout rate ever observed for any racial or ethnic group of young Americans since 1972.

The gap in turnout by educational attainment remained large; voter turnout of young people without college experience was 36%, compared to a 62% rate among young people with college experience. (About half of the young adult population has some college experience.) There was also a significant gender gap in turnout: young women voted at a rate eight points above young men. The fact sheet on youth voter turnout and trends in 2008 and a 50-state breakdown can be found at www.civicyouth.org.

"We have now seen three consecutive presidential elections with substantial increases in youth turnout," said CIRCLE Director Peter Levine. "We appear to have entered a new era of stronger youth engagement--also shown by high rates of volunteering and community service. But there are persistent gaps in engagement, with less advantaged youth still mostly left out. We must find ways to engage and expand civic opportunities for this cohort of young people."

<i>Presidential Election Year</i>	18-24 Citizens	25 and older Citizens	18-29 Citizens	30 and older Citizens
1972	52.1%	68.4%	55.4%	69.5%
1976	44.4%	65.4%	48.8%	67.0%
1980	43.4%	68.5%	48.2%	70.6%
1984	44.3%	68.9%	49.1%	71.2%
1988	39.9%	65.8%	43.8%	68.5%
1992	48.6%	70.5%	52.0%	72.4%
1996	35.6%	61.6%	39.6%	63.6%

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2000	36.1%	62.9%	40.3%	64.6%
2004	46.7%	66.3%	49.0%	67.7%
2008	48.5%	65.8%	51.1%	67.0%

In the 2008 election the youth voter turnout was highest in Washington DC (76%), Minnesota (68%), Iowa (63%), New Hampshire (62%) and Oregon (59%). It was lowest in Hawaii (31%), Arkansas (35%), Utah (37%), Texas (39%), and South Dakota (44%).

For the most part, in each state, voter turnout among those age 30 and above was at least 10 percentage points higher than turnout among 18-to-29 year-olds. However, young people in Washington D.C. voted at a higher rate (76%) than their adult counterparts (73%). Iowa, Minnesota, and West Virginia had the smallest gaps between youth and adult turnout rates (under 10 percentage points).

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***CIRCLE (The Center for Information and Research on Civic Learning and Engagement)** conducts and promotes research on the civic and political engagement of Americans between the ages of 15 and 25. A part of the Jonathan M. Tisch College of Citizenship and Public Service at Tufts University, CIRCLE has received funding from The Pew Charitable Trusts, Carnegie Corporation of New York and several other foundations.*

***The Jonathan M. Tisch College of Citizenship and Public Service**, a national leader in civic engagement, prepares students from all fields of Tufts University to become engaged public citizens and community leaders.*

***Tufts University**, located on three Massachusetts campuses in Boston, Medford/Somerville, and Grafton, and in Talloires, France, is recognized as one of the premier research universities in the United States. Tufts enjoys a global reputation for academic excellence and for the preparation of students as leaders in a wide range of professions. A growing number of innovative teaching and research initiatives span all Tufts campuses, and collaboration among the faculty and students in the undergraduate, graduate, and professional programs across the University's schools is widely encouraged.*