NEW RESOURCES AVAILABLE FOR MEASURING EFFECTS OF K-12 CIVIC EDUCATION PROGRAMS

CIRCLE has released two new Working Papers containing assessment tools for measuring the effects of civic education programs. The first Working Paper (#48), "Developing Indicators and Measures of Civic Outcomes for Elementary School Students," contains two sets of instruments designed to be used at the elementary school level. The measures include a student survey of civic knowledge, skills and attitudes and a set of corresponding grade level observation checklists of student skills and behaviors. The tools were created by Bernadette Chi of the East Bay Conservation Corps, JoAnn Jastrzab of Abt Associates Inc., and Alan Melchoir of the Center for Youth and Communities at the Heller School, Brandeis University. They were advised by a national group of civic education leaders including Joseph Kahne, Constance Flanagan, Judith Torney-Purta and Mary McFarland. The tools can be downloaded from CIRCLE's Web site at www.civicyouth.org.

According to Bernadette Chi, the lead author of CIRCLE Working Paper #48, "While content standards and assessments readily exist to articulate the academic and artistic development of students, youth civic development, especially at the elementary level, has been under-conceptualized. We found that there was a real need for a more robust, comprehensive developmental framework for citizenship education that begins with younger ages and addresses civic skills and dispositions to the same degree as civic knowledge."

The second Working Paper (#49), entitled "Assessing School Citizenship Education Climate: Implications for the Social Studies," focuses on the middle- and upper-grade levels. It presents the *School Citizenship Education Climate Assessment*—a self-assessment tool developed to help schools evaluate their citizenship education strategies and policies—and examines its implications for social studies classes. The tool was created for the Education Commission of the States (ECS) by Gary Homana, Carolyn Barber and Judith Torney-Purta of the University of Maryland and is available at http://www.ecs.org/qna. The ECS Web site also contains a set of items for assessing outcomes of civic education in the areas of knowledge, skills, and dispositions across the elementary, middle, and high school grades.

THE CHALLENGE OF MEASURING CIVIC EDUCATION AT THE ELEMENTARY GRADE LEVEL

Despite the recent growth of standardized testing within schools, there are very few assessment tools available for measuring the effects of civic education at the elementary school level. According to Bernadette Chi, the lead author of CIRCLE Working Paper #48, "While content standards and assessments readily exist to articulate the academic and artistic development of students, youth civic development, especially at the elementary level, has been under-conceptualized. We found that there was a real need for a more robust, comprehensive developmental framework for citizenship education that begins with younger ages and addresses civic skills and dispositions to the same degree as civic knowledge."

CIRCLE
The Center for Information & Research on Civic Learning & Engagement

In developing their assessment tools, Chi and her co-authors came across several measurement challenges. First, in elementary school, reading levels vary drastically. The authors developed a student survey that is appropriate for grades three and above. To help teachers of younger students with more varied reading abilities (Kindergarten through second grade) the authors also developed a student observation checklist. Chi cautions, however, that while the checklist can help teachers to document skills and behaviors that are relevant to civic development, there is more work to be done to verify the validity and reliability of the observation checklists.

Despite the measurement challenges, Chi and her colleagues created a set of tested, reliable measures of civic education for use at the elementary school level.

Additionally, the authors faced a conceptual challenge when developing their measurement tools. Chi notes, "In elementary grades, there is a tendency to award 'good citizenship' grades based on obedience to classroom and school rules and demonstration of good work habits (neat handwriting, homework completion, etc.). Yet other conceptions of citizenship and civic engagement also exist and ultimately may be deemed desirable, such as active participation in one's community or a principled position from which individuals question unjust rules, laws or circumstances."

Despite the measurement challenges, Chi and her colleagues created a set of tested, reliable measures of civic education for use at the elementary school level. Staff and faculty at the East Bay Conservation Corps Charter School in Oakland, California were key to the development of the conceptual framework and instruments. The instruments were then tested for reliability across a wide variety of elementary schools in a national pilot. Both assessment tools—the student survey of civic knowledge, skills and attitudes and the set of corresponding grade level observation checklists of student skills and behaviors—can be downloaded from CIRCLE's Web site at www.civicyouth.org.

FOCUSING ON SCHOOL AND CLASSROOM CLIMATE

The second CIRCLE Working Paper (#49), "Assessing School Citizenship Education Climate: Implications for the Social Studies," explains the development of another assessment tool, the *School Citizenship Education Climate Assessment*. This tool was designed to be used by teachers and school administrators, mainly at the middle- and upper-grade levels. According to the lead author, Gary Homana, "Among other things, we wanted to create a self-assessment tool to help members of the school community focus on the relevant characteristics of a positive school and classroom climate in order to better promote good citizenship education. Looking at the bigger picture, we also wanted to develop a tool to help school administrators create workable strategies to increase and sustain policies and practices that enhance students' knowledge, skills and dispositions relating to competent citizenship."

In CIRCLE Working Paper #49, the researchers explain that the *School Citizenship Education Climate Assessment* was derived from a variety of research fields including civic education, educational psychology and service-learning.   Based on the literature, the authors created a theoretical framework for the assessment consisting of seven characteristics of school climate that they believe are critical to civic education (see the text box, below, for a list of the seven characteristics). The assessment contains questions relating to each of the seven characteristics. For example, a question about characteristic #7 (Engagement in and Learning about the Community) is as follows:

The statements that follow relate to your school's support for service-learning. (Answer Choices: Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Agree Strongly, Agree, I Don't Know/ Does Not Apply)
1) This school formally recognizes service-learning as part of its mission and/or vision.
2) This school has written policies designed to support service-learning.
3) Service-learning is incorporated into the school's curriculum guidelines.
4) Service-learning at this school is linked to content standards.

In addition to the assessment tool and the CIRCLE Working Paper, the authors provide a short narrative report explaining how to use the assessment tool (both the assessment tool and accompanying narrative report can be found at http://www.ecs.org/qna). Homana states, "We tried to make the assessment tool as user-friendly as possible. We provide instructions on how to properly use the assessment, including a description of how to compute composite scale scores, recommendations of who should complete the survey, and suggestions for using assessment results." CIRCLE Working Paper #49 concludes with suggestions for future research and can be downloaded from www.civicyouth.org.

SEVEN KEY CHARACTERISTICS OF CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION

1. Official recognition and community acceptance of the civic purpose of education that is communicated to all teachers, students and administrators

2. Meaningful learning of civic-related knowledge that builds on and enhances academic and participation skills

3. Cooperation and collaboration in approaching civic related learning and problem-solving

4. Mutual trust and positive interactions among diverse students, faculty and administrators

5. Students' input in planning and skills in participatory problem-solving that is valued

6. Deliberation and dialogue about issues that are thoughtful and respectful

7. Engagement within the school and commitment to learn about and interact with the broader community

Source: CIRCLE Working Paper (#49) "Assessing School Citizenship Education Climate: Implications for the Social Studies"

RESEARCH ROUNDUP

COLLEGE STUDENTS REDEFINE CIVIC PARTICIPATION

A CIRCLE Literature Review by the Kettering Foundation's Nicholas Longo and Ross Meyer provides a detailed account of recent trends in the research on civic engagement among college students. The authors cite studies from a variety of sources, including CIRCLE research and CIRCLE-funded research. Longo and Meyer not only summarize recent trends, but also identify areas where more research is needed.

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Longo and Meyer begin with the often-cited findings of the lack of participation in college students. While initial studies discovered a "silent generation" of college students, later research strove to understand why, and whether college students were truly apathetic toward civic participation. Perhaps most significantly, the review finds an emerging trend: college students are redefining participation and are not as apathetic as earlier research suggested.

MEASURING STUDENT ATTITUDES ON POLITICS

The authors first report the research on what they call the "alienated college student," which emerged between 1994 and 2000. This body of research contended that college students were not participating at the same rates as previous generations. "There is widespread evidence, along with a general characterization in the media, that college students today are cynical and apathetic about politics," Dr. Stephen Bennett and Dr. Linda Bennett (2001) wrote. This characterization of college students gained popular momentum, starting with Robert D. Putnam's landmark study on the decline of civic engagement in *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community* (2000). As evidence of alienation, Longo and Meyer cite national surveys by The National Association of Secretaries of State and the Kettering Foundation, which found that college students held pessimistic attitudes about the political system. Moreover, the lower voter turnout rates of college students, a tangible measure of civic participation, seemed to reflect their negative attitudes towards government.

Yet, research findings are mixed. Voter turnout among college students rose during the 2004 presidential election when numerous organizations focused on college students. Many students reported feeling pessimistic about the government while still planning to vote, as found in a 2004 survey by Harvard University's Institute of Politics (IOP). Furthermore, the authors cite a CIRCLE study finding that "a vast majority of college students were active in the 2004 election." Since 2000, college students have showed increased interest in the news, and there has been a wave of organizing, including many "efforts to use consumer power to make change." Anne Blackhurst's (2002) study of three Midwestern institutions buttresses the findings of Harvard's IOP and CIRCLE. Blackhurst found "that college students may not be as cynical about politicians and the political process as the conventional wisdom suggests."

In sum, it appears that college students are not as politically engaged as previous generations, but the reasons behind this trend are mixed. Some research finds that college students shun politics, but other research shows students are interested in getting involved in the political process.

ALTERNATIVES TO POLITICAL ENGAGEMENT

In any case, political participation—specifically voting—is only one measure of civic engagement. Longo and Meyer also consider the literature on community participation, in which they find a paradox called "The Scissor Effect." In short, "The Scissor Effect: college students are engaged in their community, even if they are not involved in political activities." Or, in other words, there is an observed rise in community involvement and a decline in political participation. Longo and Meyer identify several qualitative and quantitative studies which show that college students are interested in getting involved in their community as a sort of backlash to what they see as an incompetent political system. Along these lines, Linda Sax (2000) captures the sentiments of college students when she writes "it is quite possible that students are simply placing their energies where they feel they can make a difference." Similarly, other research has termed the surge in community service as an alternative to politics.

The authors' picture of college students is beginning to emerge;

CONCENTRATING ON INSTITUTIONAL REFORM

Most research on youth civic engagement locates the problem inside young people's heads—as a lack of knowledge, motivation, or skill—and asks what forms of education and outreach would change adolescents. However, it is also important to consider the cultural and institutional contexts in which young people do or do not engage. Perhaps current circumstances make it impossible or undesirable for some to participate.

In March 2005, an interdisciplinary group of scholars met face-to-face in Washington, DC to discuss youth civic engagement from this institutional angle. The scholars contributed papers to address two main questions: 1) What conditions deter young people's involvement in politics and civic life? And 2) what institutional or cultural changes could enhance youth engagement? These two questions are addressed in a new CIRCLE Working Paper (#45), which is a compilation of 14 articles on the topic of youth civic engagement.

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In the introduction of CIRCLE Working Paper #45, CIRCLE director Peter Levine and James Youniss of Catholic University summarize themes that emerged in the papers and discussions.

First, researchers should consider institutional reforms, not just direct interventions. For instance, "the kind of value-neutrality obsessively nurtured by institutions (especially schools, but also many youth organizations, clubs, etc.) has wrought, perhaps, irreparable damage to the institutional capacity to influence youth in meaningful ways," writes Joel Westheimer, a contributing author to CIRCLE Working Paper #45. Another example is political competition. Unfortunately, many electoral districts are uncompetitive, even though competition and debate mobilize people to participate in large-scale politics. However, as Diana Mutz argues, disagreement can *discourage* participation in smaller associations, neighborhoods, and families, "in part because of the social awkwardness that comes from publicly taking a stand that friends or associates may oppose."

Participants also discussed the economic context of adolescence. Today, students believe that their choices and individual performance have high economic stakes. Although opportunities have increased for many people over the last 30 years, so have the consequences of failure. Adolescents may feel that they face these choices alone because of the relative weakness of families, neighborhoods, religious congregations, and voluntary associations. This sense of risk affects their civic engagement.

Today, students believe that their choices and individual performance have high economic stakes. Although opportunities have increased for many people over the last 30 years, so have the consequences of failure. Adolescents may feel that they face these choices alone because of the relative weakness of families, neighborhoods, religious congregations, and voluntary associations. This sense of risk affects their civic engagement.

Along with elections and the economy, organizations have changed over time. Just as televised debates between candidates replaced fireside chats on the radio, emergent forms of involvement are taking root today. For example, Dietlind Stolle is exploring the new consumer-based politics in which people organize to boycott or "buycott" (choose to purchase) goods such as food and clothing for normative and political reasons. Surveys show that young people predominate in these efforts.

Finally, immigrants and minority youth face special challenges to engagement, because they are infrequent targets of political mobilization and lack resources that other kinds of youth accrue by way of location or education.

The conference that produced these articles was funded by a separate grant from Carnegie Corporation of New York to the Life Cycle Institute, Catholic University of America. CIRCLE worked with the Life Cycle Institute to organize the conference. Download the complete collection of articles in CIRCLE Working Paper #45, "Youth Civic Engagement: An Institutional Turn," from http://www.civicyouth.org/research/products/working_papers.htm ◼

RESEARCH ROUNDUP

CIRCLE CONVENES A MEETING ON IMMIGRANT YOUTH CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

On April 25 in New York City, CIRCLE brought together leading scholars, practitioners and grant-makers to inform our ongoing research on the civic engagement of immigrant youth. Twenty-one participants gathered at The New School University, amidst growing political and media discussion of immigration laws and immigrants. The meeting sought to explore the specific characteristics of immigrant youth that might affect their civic engagement. However, at the heart of the meeting was the question of measuring civic engagement among immigrant youth. Participants concluded that traditional measures of civic engagement do not capture the myriad ways that immigrant youth are involved in politics and civil society.

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Similar themes had also arisen during the annual conference of the Society for Research in Adolescence in March. At a panel on "Civic Engagement in Immigrant and Minority Youth," CIRCLE grantees Lene Arnett Jensen and Constance Flanagan presented papers on immigrant youth and CIRCLE director Peter Levine was the discussant.

THE IMPORTANCE OF IMMIGRANT YOUTH

Quite apart from the current debate about immigration, immigrant youth are an important subpopulation to understand. As Levine noted in his opening remarks, "Immigrant youth are very diverse and not easy to generalize about. However, in general, they differ from other young people in certain respects. Their civic loyalty is sometimes questioned. They must make choices about their political identities. Members of their own families differ in citizenship status. They may have opportunities to engage in another country while in the U.S. They can experience statelessness or exile; and their legal status may be in doubt." Furthermore, immigrant youth and children of immigrants comprise nearly 20 percent of the U.S. youth population (ages 18 to 25) and their contribution to society will determine whether they will reap the benefits of a healthy democracy.

IMMIGRANT YOUTH: A MULTI-METHOD STUDY OF NEW YORK CITY

John Mollenkopf, Director for the Center of Urban Research at the City University of New York (CUNY) Graduate Center, opened the discussion with an overview of an ongoing, multi-method study of New York City's immigrant population. Mollenkopf presented his findings on the voting behavior of New Yorkers by immigration status, race, and ethnicity. He noted that while "immigrants will reshape the American electoral terrain," today's "youth of immigrant origin are doubly disadvantaged in political mobilization." They are underrepresented in elected office—preventing their views from being represented proportionately—and they are concentrated in politically non-competitive sites (often the large cities of a few big states, such as Los Angeles, New York City and Chicago).   In his closing statements, Mollenkopf was optimistic about the future of immigrant youth and their role in New York City politics. "The immigrant youth population of New York is a growing presence," said Mollenkopf, "and, if established elites choose to promote them, they are poised to emerge as the new leadership in New York." Mollenkopf predicts that immigrant youth, if supported by existing elites, should experience their first political impact in local legislative districts and then work upward to city, state and national politics.

PROBLEMS IN MEASURING THE CIVIC ENGAGEMENT OF IMMIGRANT YOUTH

Following Mollenkopf's presentation, CIRCLE's Mark Hugo Lopez and Karlo Barrios Marcelo presented some preliminary data on immigrant youth demographics and their levels of civic engagement. Their two preliminary reports used recent survey data from the Census Bureau and The Pew Hispanic Center's Latino Survey of 2004. Their goal was to elicit suggestions for how to measure the civic engagement of immigrant youth more fully and accurately. To that end, Lopez moderated a conversation that asked two main questions:

1) What types of civic engagement activities are we missing?
2) Are there other data sources that we should focus on?

Prompted by Lopez's questions, the participants' responses revolved around the validity of "traditional measures" of civic engagement. Some argued that if young immigrants are not volunteering and voting (the standard behaviors measured in

surveys), this is a problem that should be recognized so that it can be addressed. However, many participants worried that immigrant youth are engaging in a number of activities that large surveys do not capture. Further, surveys cannot show change. Immigration is a gradual process, and longitudinal studies are necessary to follow the development of immigrant youth civic engagement over time.

However, many participants worried that immigrant youth are engaging in a number of activities that large surveys do not capture. Further, surveys cannot show change. Immigration is a gradual process, and longitudinal studies are necessary to follow the development of immigrant youth civic engagement over time.

In addition to raising concerns about measurement, participants worried that large national surveys were missing important segments of the immigrant community—especially undocumented immigrants. Others took a different approach. "We need to know why immigrant youth are here and how long they expect to stay. The community or region of the country where they migrate will be a significant mediator in an immigrant youth's level and ability to participate," said Alfred Amado, Assistant Professor of Education at the University of Maryland.

RECONCEPTUALIZING CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

In her presentation, Jane Junn, Associate Professor of Political Science at Rutgers University, noted that "traditional measures" of civic engagement often overlook important political behavior. For example, Rosa Parks' famous political act on a segregated Montgomery bus might not be counted by many standardized survey questions that leave out political acts that are against the law. Also, efforts to organize business ties within an immigrant community might not be counted, even though such efforts might be the most effective way to build civic and political power. Junn pressed the participants to clarify the types of civic and political activities that should be measured.

Participants suggested other non-traditional measures of civic engagement, such as helping new immigrants to adapt to American culture or translating documents and conversations for one's parents. Hector Cordero-Guzman, Associate Professor and Chair of the Black and Hispanic Studies Department at Baruch College, CUNY, noted, "What some people may see as a cost of

being an immigrant or a child of an immigrant [having to translate into a second language] could also be looked at as a form of civic engagement." Moreover, many participants agreed that cultural notions of civic engagement vary and the current measurements of civic engagement do not fit the cultural notions held by many immigrant groups.

Participants advanced the idea of using focus groups as a means to reconceptualize civic engagement from the bottom up. They suspect that survey designers have been out of touch with the ways immigrant youth are involved. "The motivation for civic engagement needs to be understood," said Tatiana Wah, Assistant Professor at Milano The New School for Management and Urban Policy.

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NEXT STEPS

CIRCLE plans to disseminate in-house and commissioned research on immigrant youth civic engagement and to design its future research agenda to improve the analysis of immigrant youth civic engagement, based on the participants' suggestions.

RESEARCH ROUNDUP

CIRCLE FACT SHEETS

CIRCLE has produced over thirty Fact Sheets, which are brief documents with basic information and graphs on various topics. The following Fact Sheets can be found on CIRCLE's Web site:

YOUTH DEMOGRAPHICS

≡ **Youth Demographics:** Based on Current Population Survey (CPS) data. Compares the numbers of 18-24 year old citizens by gender, race, ethnicity, marital status, and educational attainment, and assesses population trends from 1972-2000.

POLITICAL PARTICIPATION AND VOTING

≡ **The Youth Vote 2004:** Based on 1972-2004 CPS data. Compares voter turnout for 18-24 year olds and 18-29 year olds to that of older voters.

≡ **The New Face of America's Social-Issues Voters:** Based on the National Election Pool (NEP) national exit poll. Presents data on the role that "moral values" played in the 2004 youth vote.

≡ **Quick Facts on Young Voters: 2004:** Based on 1972-2004 CPS data. Provides a quick summary of voting statistics from the 2004 election.

≡ **Youth Voter Turnout in the States during the 2004 Presidential and 2002 Midterm Elections:** Based on 1972-2004 CPS data. Shows a substantial variation in voter turnout rates by state in the 2002 and 2004 elections.

≡ **Voter Turnout Among Young Women and Men:** Based on 1972-2004 CPS data, 2004 NEP exit poll data, and Center for Excellence in Government (CEG)/CIRCLE 2004 National Youth Survey data. Provides information on one measure of civic engagement, voter turnout, for men and women. Also highlights some of the similarities and differences between young women and young men in their attitudes towards voting.

≡ **Electoral Engagement Among Minority Youth:** Based on 1972-2004 CPS data, 2004 NEP exit poll data, and the 2004 CEG/CIRCLE National Youth Survey. Presents data on the characteristics of the youth population and youth voting trends through 2004 by race and ethnicity.

≡ **Electoral Engagement Among Non-College Attending Youth:** Based on 1972-2004 CPS data, 2004 NEP exit poll data, and the 2004 CEG/CIRCLE National Youth Survey. Provides information on the voting rates of non-college attending youth.

≡ **College Students in the 2004 Election:** Based on a survey of 1,200 college students designed by Professor Richard Niemi of the University of Rochester and Professor Michael Hanmer of Georgetown University. Reports on college students voting choices in the 2004 presidential election.

≡ **State Voter Registration and Election Day Laws:** Based on CIRCLE Working Papers #01 and #15. Compares states' voter registration laws and the effects state voting laws have on turnout.

≡ **How Young People Express Their Political Views:** Based on 2002 CIRCLE Civic and Political Health Survey.

≡ **Electoral Engagement Among Latino Youth:** Based on 1972-2004 CPS data and 2002 CEG/CIRCLE National Youth Survey data.

COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION

≡ **How Individuals Begin Volunteering:** Uses the CPS September Volunteer Supplement for 2003. Offers a breakdown of how volunteers initially become involved in volunteer activity by state and age group.

≡ **Time Spent in Volunteer Activity: 2002 and 2003:** Uses two data sets, CIRCLE's 2002 Civic and Political Health Survey and CPS September Volunteer Supplements for 2002 and 2003. Offers a breakdown of time spent in volunteer activity by states and age groups.

≡ **Youth Volunteering in the States: 2002 and 2003:** Uses CPS September Volunteer Supplements for 2002 and 2003. Offers a breakdown of volunteer rates by states and age groups.

≡ **Volunteering Among Young People:** Based on a variety of data sources including CIRCLE's 2002 Civic and Political Health Survey, Monitoring the Future data from 1976-2001, Higher Education Research Insititue (HERI) data from 1984-2000, and National Education Longitudinal Study (NELS) data from 1988. Compares youth volunteering with that of other generations, tracks high school and college student volunteering over time, and breaks down youth volunteering for organizations by organization type.

YOUTH ATTITUDES AND BELIEFS

≡ **Adolescents' Trust and Civic Participation in the United States:** Based on data from the IEA Civic Education study. Compares American youth's levels of trust with that of youth from four countries of varying political history.

RESEARCH ROUNDUP

≡ *Youth Attitudes Toward Civic Education and Community Service Requirements:* Based on 2002 CEG/CIRCLE Youth Survey data.

NEWS & ENTERTAINMENT MEDIA

≡ *Attention to Media and Trust in Media Sources:* Based on data from the IEA Civic Education study. Compares American youth's exposure to media, use of media, and trust in government and media sources, and political knowledge with that of youth from other developed nations.

≡ *Young People and Political Campaigning on the Internet:* Based on 2004 CEG/CIRCLE National Youth Survey. Compares support for different online campaign techniques by generation.

≡ *Media Use Among Young People:* Based on CIRCLE 2002 Civic and Political Health Survey and General Social Survey (GSS) data from 1972-2000. Tracks trends in media consumption by age groups and media type.

K-12 CIVIC EDUCATION

≡ *Federal Policies for Civic Education and Service:* Describes current federal laws and appropriations.

≡ *The Effects of Civic Education on Civic Skills:* Based on author's Ph.D. Dissertation, "Civic Skills and Civic Education: An Empirical Assessment," University of Maryland, School of Public Policy, 2005.

≡ *How Teachers' Preparation Relates to Students' Civic Knowledge and Engagement in the United States:* Based on IEA data. Examines how teachers are prepared to provide civic education as well as their attitudes toward civic education.

≡ *Strengths and Weaknesses in U.S. Students' Knowledge and Skills:* Based on IEA data. Reports American student performance on knowledge measures in relation to the international mean, home background, topics studied in school, and attitudes about types of civic participation.

≡ *Themes Emphasized in Social Studies and Civics Classes:* Based on 2004 CEG/CIRCLE Youth Survey.

≡ *Civics Curriculum and Civic Skills: Recent Evidence:* Based on IEA Civic Education Study and National Household Education Survey (NHES) data from 1999. Reports civics topics studied by 9th graders and tracks students who are required to pay attention to government by grade.

SERVICE-LEARNING

≡ *Service-Learning in K-12 Public Education:* Based on surveys by National Youth Leadership Council, National Center for Education Statistics, and Fred Newmann and Robert

Rutter. Offers a glimpse at the state of service-learning in public education today.

NON-COLLEGE YOUTH

≡ *Civic Engagement Among Non-College Attending Youth:* Based on 1972-2004 CPS data, 2004 NEP exit poll data, and the 2004 CEG/CIRCLE Youth Survey. Provides information on the voting rates of non-college attending youth.

GROUP MEMBERSHIP AND SOCIAL NETWORKS

≡ *Participation in Sports and Civic Engagement:* Based on the 2002 CEG/CIRCLE National Youth Survey.

≡ *Characteristics of Group Membership Among Young People:* Based on Social Capital Community Benchmark Survey 2000 data, 2002 CIRCLE Civic and Political Health Survey. Compares youth membership by type of group and by members' gender, race/ethnicity, educational level, and political ideology.

≡ *Group Membership and Group Involvement Among Young People:* Based on Social Capital Community Benchmark Survey 2000 data, 2002 CIRCLE Civic and Political Health Survey. Compares membership by type of group with age.

RACE, GENDER, AND IMMIGRANT STATUS

≡ *Voter Turnout Among Young Women and Men:* See "Political Participation and Voting" for a description.

≡ *Electoral Engagement Among Minority Youth:* See "Political Participation and Voting" for a description.

≡ *Attitudes of Young People Toward Diversity:* Based on the National Election Study (NES) 1972-2002; the GSS 1972-2002; the 2004 CEG/CIRCLE National Youth Survey; the Social Capital Survey, 2002; the IEA Civic Education Study, 2002; and The 2002 CIRCLE Civic and Political Health Survey. Summarizes young people's attitudes toward three groups that are sometimes targets of intolerance: gays, immigrants, and racial minorities.

≡ *Electoral Engagement Among Latino Youth:* See "Political Participation and Voting" for a description.

HIGHER EDUCATION

≡ *College Attendance and Civic Engagement:* Based mainly on data collected in the 2002 CIRCLE Civic and Political Health Survey. Examines the link between college experience and civic engagement, including breakdowns by gender.

RESEARCH TO PRACTICE

From Research to Practice, a column dedicated to recognizing successful "bridges" between researchers and practitioners, reports on research with practical implications for youth civic engagement. Additionally, it presents concrete examples of how practitioners have applied this research to encourage the participation of young people in civic and political life.

HOW CAN SPORTS AND CIVIC ENGAGEMENT MIX?

In February 2006, CIRCLE released two new research studies analyzing the relationship between youth sports and youth civic engagement. The first study, a Fact Sheet entitled "Participation in Sports and Civic Engagement" by Mark Hugo Lopez and Kimberlee Moore from CIRCLE, offers a detailed look at the role sports play in the civic development of 18 to 25 year olds. The data show that young people who participated in sports activities during their high school years were more likely than non-sports participants to have volunteered, registered to vote, voted, and followed the news closely. The second study is entitled "Sports, Youth and Character: A Critical Survey" and was written by Robert Fullinwider, a research scholar at the University of Maryland. Fullinwider completed a literature review on the effects of sports participation on youth ages 4 to 18, and found conflicting analyses and a dearth of reliable, data-driven research on the role sports play in character development. This article explores how coaches, parents and sports programs play a role in drawing connections between sports and civic engagement.

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WHAT PART DOES COACHING PLAY?

There are many ways in which a coach can teach civic engagement lessons through sports. In his CIRCLE Working Paper, Fullinwider states that "parent education in all sports is made mandatory by many county and municipal recreation departments, using tools provided by the Parents Association for Youth Sports, [an] offshoot of the National Alliance for Youth Sports."   In addition, the American Sports Education Program (ASEP) has developed many trainings for coaches. A description of ASEP's 'Coaching Principles' course includes, among other topics, a "Coaching for Character" section, as well as a "Managing Relationships" section.

Additionally, there are various other ways that coaches can encourage civic engagement through sports. Gregory Clark, Youth Coordinator for the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission, believes that sports have the ability to teach young people leadership principles, teamwork, and an understanding that people "need to do their part." "Sports teach you how to communicate. I believe that transfers over to civic engagement...it actually teaches the athlete to speak up and voice his/her opinion." However, Clark does not "think that most coaches know they're instilling those skills."

Rick Eckstein, a Sociology professor at Villanova University, coaches his 12 year old daughter's sports team. Eckstein points out that while there may be opportunities for coaches to help young people learn civic skills through sports, there are "huge philosophical clashes" within the league that he coaches. He explains that some teams focus on winning while others focus on teaching participants to be "a good sport" and to have fun. This reluctantly moves him to suggest that there "should be an emphasis put on the non-sports part of coaching," potentially through clinics for volunteer coaches. Such clinics, for example,

Graph 1: Sports Participation and Voting in 2000; Unadjusted and Adjusted Rates, 18-25 Year Olds, 2002.

Sports: Unadjusted 44%, Adjusted 43%
No-Sports: Unadjusted 33%, Adjusted 33%

Unadjusted Adjusted
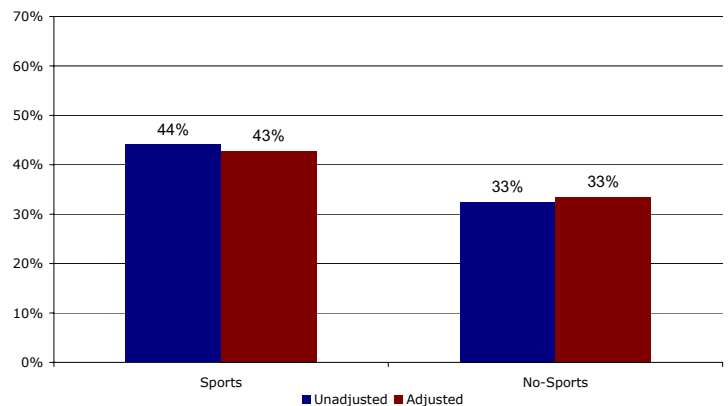
Graph 1 Note: Adjusted percentages are predicted probabilities based on a model that controls for gender, race/ethnicity, age, marital status, educational attainment, other high school activity involvement, work status, income status, region, MSA status, college student status, number of kids in household, household size, internet use, household head status, and rent status. This model was estimated for 18-25 year olds. All results are weighted.

RESEARCH TO PRACTICE

might teach coaches about the possible civic benefits of sports participation.

Eckstein also suggests that gender is an important consideration for coaches when thinking about how sports impacts young people, including the relationship between sports and civic engagement and character development. The Lopez/Moore research finds that there are small gender differences in the effects of sports on certain civic behaviors. For example, the research suggests that boys who play sports are more likely to pay attention to the news (particularly sports news) than girls who play sports or boys who do not participate in sports.

Rick Eckstein, a Sociology professor at Villanova University, coaches his 12 year old daughter's sports team. Eckstein points out that while there may be opportunities for coaches to help young people learn civic skills through sports, there are "huge philosophical clashes" within the league that he coaches.

THE ROLE OF PARENTS

Parents play a large role in encouraging sports participation. Clark notes, "Kids participate in sports because their parents sign them up. A lot of kids don't want to participate." He suggests that pointing out the connections between sports and civic engagement may entice more parents to sign their children up for sports programs. For example, if parents are made aware that there are research findings suggesting that young people who participate in sports are more likely to volunteer and to vote, they may be more likely to encourage their child to engage in sports activities. As a result, he believes that statistics on the relationship between sports and civic engagement could help with recruitment and membership in local sports programs.

SPORTS PROGRAMS

Finally, the research findings on sports and civic engagement have the potential to assist in the planning and evaluation processes of sports programs. Eckstein suggests that communities may be able to have more of a positive influence on youth sports through careful planning. While Eckstein would like to see more rigorous, longitudinal research on the sports experience, he does feel that

it's important to consider the changing social meaning of sports. He cautions that if communities want to see more benefits from sports, including potentially civic benefits, they need to think carefully about the message that is being conveyed through sports programs. According to Eckstein, "Sports can help, sports can hurt, it depends. It largely depends on the message that is coming from sports. I would suggest that communities take a hold of the message." ⬛

THE CAMPAIGN FOR THE CIVIC MISSION OF SCHOOLS LAUNCHES NATIONAL ADVISORY COUNCIL

On April 17th, 2006 CIRCLE Director Peter Levine spoke along with Justice Sandra Day O'Connor, Governor. Roy Romer, and others at the launch of the National Advisory Council of the Campaign for the Civic Mission of Schools. The event, held at the National Press Club in Washington D.C. was televised by C-SPAN and covered in a nationally syndicated column by David Broder.

Saying "the future of our democracy depends on a better-informed and more-engaged citizenry," former Supreme Court Justice Sandra Day O'Connor and former Colorado Governor Roy Romer issued a call to "restore the civic mission of schools and ensure that civic learning is on par with other basic academic subjects."

O'Connor and Romer are co-chairing a National Advisory Council for the Campaign for the Civic Mission of Schools. The Council includes eminent representatives from politics, law, government, education, business, the arts, and sports.

The Campaign for the Civic Mission of Schools is working with a coalition of more than 40 organizations to change federal, state, and local policies on civic learning. Among its accomplishments nationally is increasing the frequency of the National Assessment of Educational Progress in civics from every eight years to every four. On the state level, it is supporting campaigns in 18 states. To assist educators, it provides an inventory of effective civic learning resources and practices. For more information, please visit http://www.civicmissionofschools.org.

 college students are fed up with the "individualistic, divisive, negative and often counterproductive" role of politics; instead, students are focusing their energy where they can make a tangible difference—their communities. In fact, the student-written *New Student Politics* publication argues that "student work in communities is not an alternative to politics, but rather an 'alternative politics.'" Longo and Meyer notice this thread and discuss the perception gap between researchers and college students. Students believe they are not apathetic about civic involvement and their involvement is just as important as the traditional measures of political engagement created by researchers. The authors sum up this idea succinctly: "[t]he students, it seems, are part of a long tradition of younger generations casting a new civic identity and new student politics."

In conclusion, Longo and Meyer recommend four trends in need of further research.

1. "Better awareness of the emerging movement among college students to define an alternative politics which is more participatory, open, inclusive, and deliberative."
2. "Greater understanding of the recent trends toward increased participation in conventional politics, especially seen in the 2004 election."
3. "Deeper insights into the connection—and lack of connection—between involvement in community service and political engagement."
4. "Emerging practices for engaging college students in public life, and especially on the role that colleges and universities can play in education for democracy."

The full manuscript by Longo and Meyer can be downloaded from: http://www.civicyouth.org/research/areas/higher_ed.htm. ⋆

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