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Giving & Volunteering In Kent County

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Key Findings

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Key Results of the 2003 Survey of Giving and Volunteering in Kent County

- Fewer households contributed to charity in 2003 than in 2001.

In 2001, 73% of households contributed to non-9/11 charitable or religious organizations. When 9/11 giving is included, the rate increased to 83%. In 2003, 58% of households contributed. In November 2001, 74% of households expected to give in the coming 12 months, although 45% reported that their giving would be reduced in their household income dropped. The lower rate of giving in 2003 probably reflects a decline in household economic resources.

- Giving was most often directed to churches/religious organizations.

The proportion of giving households who gave to churches/religious organizations remained stable (74% in 2001 and 73% in 2003). Below is a chart showing the proportion of giving households who contributed to certain types of organizations in 2001 and in 2003:

Giving Patterns of Households who Contributed to Charitable Causes

Type of Nonprofit Organization	2001	2003
Human Service	44%	47%
United Way	34%	30%
Youth/Children	21%	52%
Education	36%	47%
Community Foundation	23%	28%
Environmental	11%	19%
Arts/Culture	11%	32%
Health	38%	52%
International or Foreign Aid	15%	22%
Other	35%	41%

- More contributing households gave to a needy friend or family member in 2003 (63%) than in 2001 (52%).
- 14% (compared to 18% in 2001) households have employers who match some of their contributions. For those who have this option, it affects the decision to give for 42% of households (34% in 2001).
- One in 5 households have the opportunity to give through payroll deductions at work., and half of them do so.
- Most contributing households contributed less than \$1,000 to charity in 2003. 14% gave more than \$1,000. 42% said their giving in 2003 was about the same as their giving in the previous year; 21% gave less, and 28% gave more.

- 49% of households plan to continue contributing to charity in the next 12 months, compared to 74% in 2001. 26% said they were unsure about their giving. This may reflect a continued concern about personal economic conditions. Reasons for possibly not giving or reducing giving in the next 12 months were as follows:

Reason for not giving	% who said reason applied	
	2001	2003
May not be able to afford to give	52%	48%
May have a lost a job or be unsure of having a job	27%	33%
May be making less money than last year	45%	37%
Might rather spend money in other ways	42%	33%
No one I know personally may have asked me to give.	31%	33%
No charitable org may have asked me to give	34%	34%
May need more info about how contributions are spent	61%	56%
May believe that too much money goes to overhead/admin	65%	53%
May be asked to give too frequently	65%	51%

- Income is related to giving. 80% of households with incomes over \$75,000 contributed to charity during 2003 compared to 58% of those with incomes between \$25,000 and \$75,000, and 45% of households with incomes under \$25,000.
- Attitudes toward nonprofits was more positive in 2003 than in 2001. This may reflect an appreciation for them during a time of increased need for assistance.

Attitudes towards Nonprofits

	% who believe the statement applies	
	2001	2003
My donation is put to appropriate use.	71%	86%
Charitable orgs do NOT do a very good job in helping those who need help	33%	28%
Charitable orgs play a major role in making our communities better places to live.	74%	86%
Charitable orgs make very little difference in dealing with major problems.	28%	28%
The need for charitable orgs is greater now than 5 years ago.	61%	75%
Charitable orgs are more effective now than 5 years ago.	50%	60%

- 51% of households volunteered in 2003 (49% in 2001). Over half (54%) of volunteers typically spend 6-10 hours a month volunteering. 39% of volunteers served an educational organization, 36% served a religious organization, 29% at a youth development organization, 23% at a human service organization, 21% at a health organization, 18% at a political organization or campaign, 14% at an arts or cultural organization, 11% at an environmental organization.

- The biggest proportion (49%) of volunteers serve for specific or special events while 18% volunteer on a weekly or monthly basis (21% do both).
- 55% of households expect to volunteer about the same in 2004 as in 2003.
- 20% of respondents said they had used the internet to find out about a charitable organization, and 11% had made a charitable contribution through the internet.
- 18% have used the internet to search for volunteer opportunities.
- 39% of respondents said it was “very important” for schools to teach children about charitable giving and volunteering and 41% said it was “somewhat important.”
- 14% “strongly agree” that it is the government’s responsibility to encourage people to volunteer; 26% “somewhat agree.”
- 21% “strongly agree” that volunteering should be a graduation requirement for Michigan high school students, and 30% “somewhat agree.”

Respondents – 467
Randomly selected