VALUES OF SCOUTS

A STUDY OF ETHICS AND CHARACTER

By Harris Interactive



BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA®

The Scout Law

A Scout is

Trustworthy

Loyal

Helpful

Friendly

Courteous

Kind

Obedient

Cheerful

Thrifty

Brave

Clean

Reverent

Values of Scouts
A Study of Ethics and Character

Research Conducted by Harris Interactive

Report Produced by
Boy Scouts of America
Youth and Family Research Center

May 2005



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Introduction

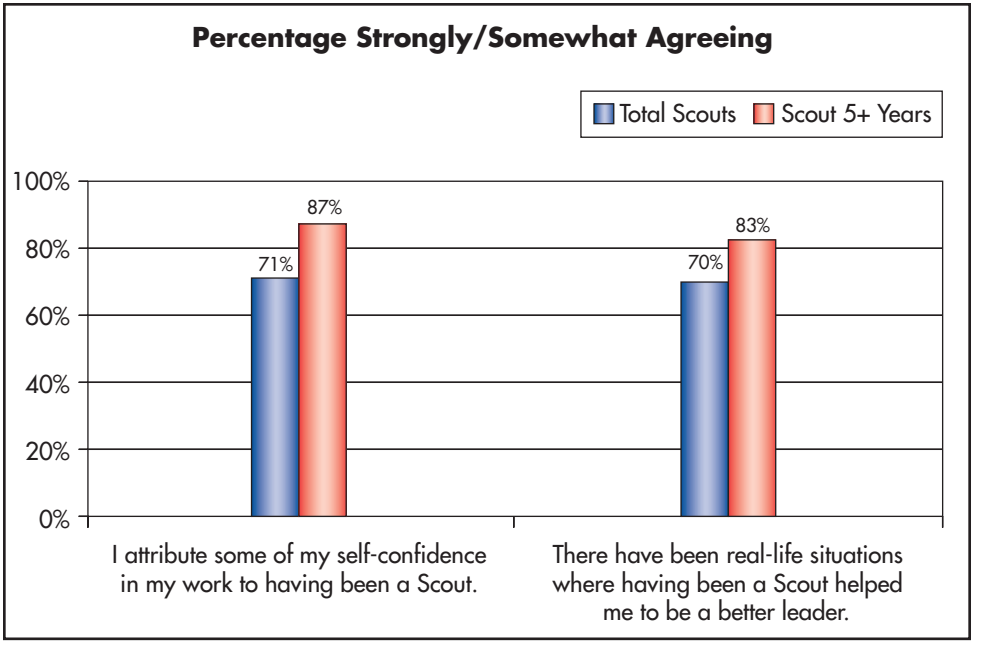
For almost 100 years, Scouting programs have instilled in youth the values found in the Scout Oath and Law. Today, these values are just as relevant in helping youth grow to their full potential as they were in 1910. Scouting helps youth develop academic skills, self-confidence, ethics, leadership skills, and citizenship skills that influence their adult lives.

The Boy Scouts of America commissioned Harris Interactive to conduct the *Values of Americans* study to examine the ethics and character of Americans young and old, and to see if values have changed over time. The Boy Scouts also wanted to determine how Scouting has influenced the values of adults over their lifetimes and the lives youth members.

Scouting has touched the lives of many youth and adults across America. More than one in 10 boys (11 percent) in the United States is currently a Scout, and an additional 23 percent have been Scouts at some point in their lives. Boys who are or were Scouts have been in the program for an average of nearly five years. By the time boys reach adulthood, 54 percent have been in a Scouting program at some time in their youth. On average, men were youth members of a Scouting program for four years; however, 42 percent stayed in Scouting for five or more years.

Scouting Provides Lifelong Benefits

Scouting provides youth with an opportunity to try new things, provide service to others, build self-confidence, and reinforce ethical standards. These opportunities not only help them when they are young, but carry forward into their adult lives, improving their relationships, their work lives, their family lives, and the values by which they live. In fact, 83 percent of men who were Scouts agree that the values they learned in Scouting continue to be very important to them today, with 63 percent who were Scouts five or more years strongly agreeing with this statement.



Base: 595 men who were Scouts as youth, 248 men who were Scouts five-plus years

The majority of men who were Scouts as youth say Scouting has been a positive influence in their lives. This sentiment is particularly strong among men who remained in Scouting five or more years. Over two-thirds of men who were Scouts attribute some of their self-confidence in their work to having been a Scout. Likewise, more than two-thirds say there have been real-life situations where having been a Scout helped them be a better leader, and half (50 percent) of men who were Scouts say their Scouting experience had a positive effect on their career development and advancement.

Men who were Scouts are more likely than those who have never been Scouts to have higher levels of education, have higher earnings, and to own their own homes. Ninety-one percent of men who were Scouts five or more years completed high school, compared with 87 percent of men who were never Scouts. They are also more likely than non-Scouts to earn a college degree (35 percent versus 19 percent). In addition, men who were Scouts five years or more have average household incomes of $80,000, compared to $61,000 reported by men who have never been Scouts. Almost three-fourths (74 percent) of men who were Scouts own their own homes, compared to 65 percent of men who were never Scouts.

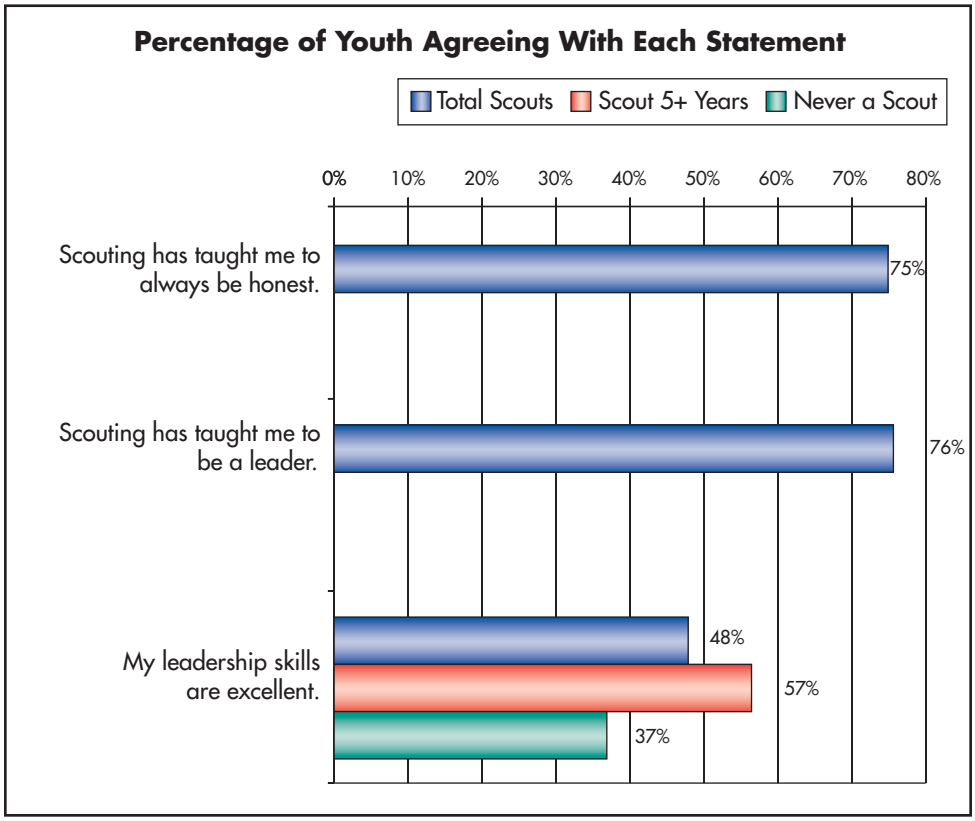
Scouting Builds Ethics and Character

As youth, Scouts are taught to live by a code of conduct exemplified in the 12 points of the Scout Law, and they continue to live by these laws in adulthood.

Trustworthy

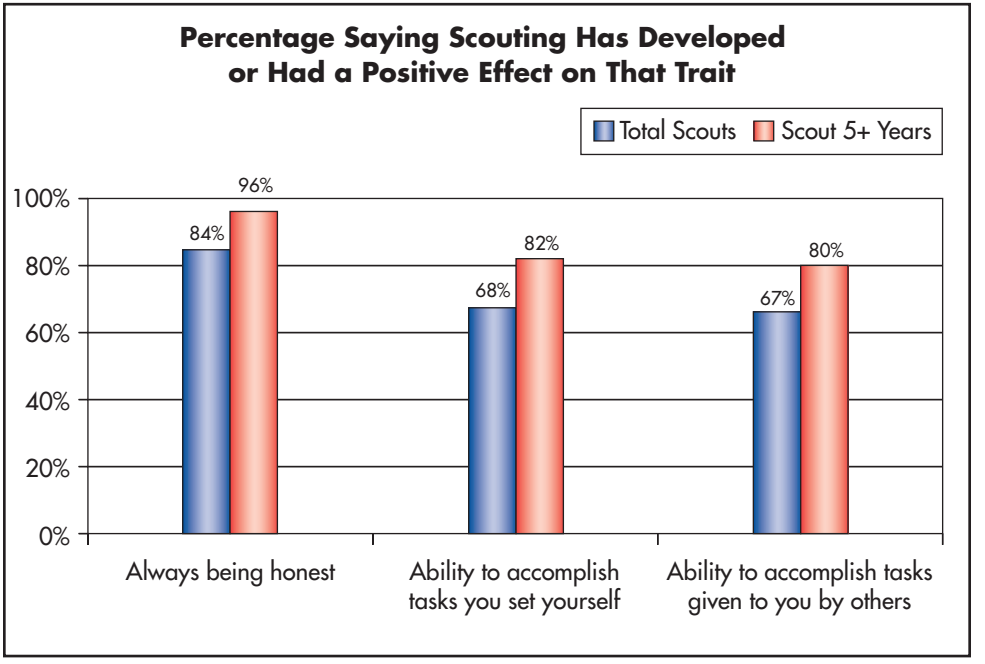
A Scout tells the truth. He keeps his promises. Honesty is part of his code of conduct. People can depend on him.

Three-fourths of youth who are or have been in Scouting say Scouting teaches them to always be honest, as well as building their leadership skills. Significantly more Scouts than non-Scouts report that their leadership skills are excellent.



Base: 275 youth who are or were Scouts, 77 youth who have five-plus years in Scouting, 593 non-Scouts

Men who were Scouts, especially those with five or more years' tenure, agree that Scouting has taught them to always be honest. Scouting has helped them develop dependability in following through on tasks they set or that others set for them.



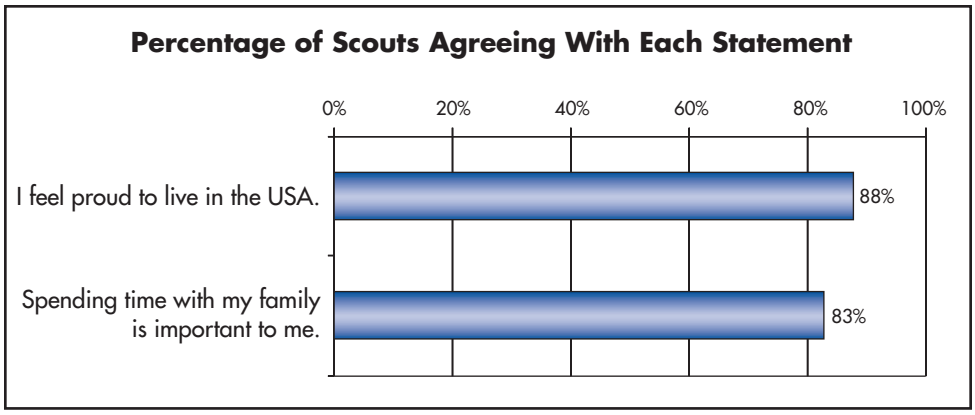
Base: 595 men who were Scouts as youth, 248 men who were Scouts five-plus years

Loyal

A Scout is true to his family, Scout leaders, friends, school, and nation.

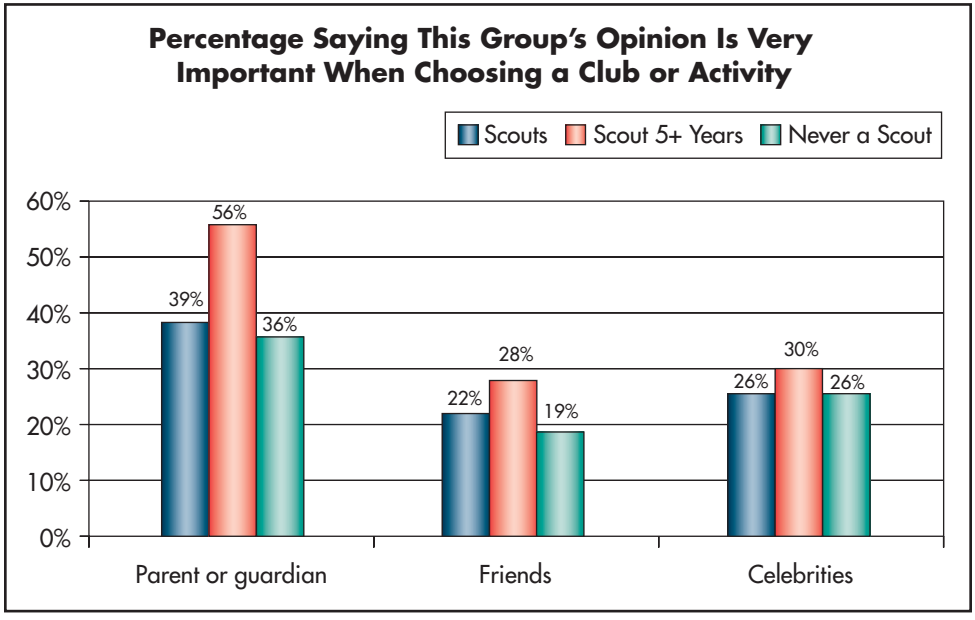
Youth who are or have been Scouts value their country and family. Almost nine out of 10 Scouts feel proud to live in the United States. The majority of Scouts also value spending time with their families.





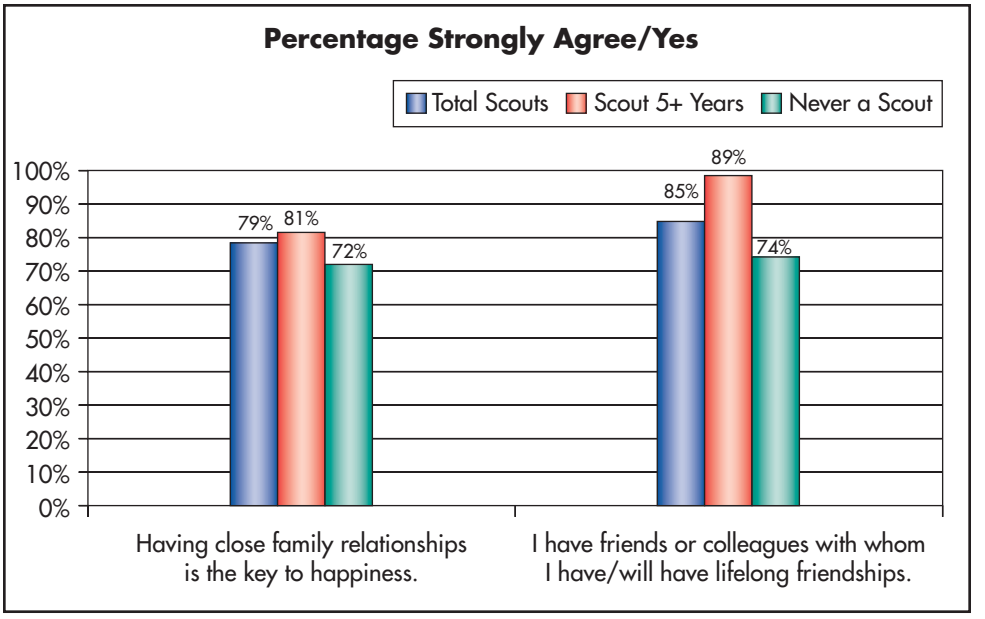
Base: 275 youth who are or were Scouts

Scouts also develop strong relationships with their parents. Youth who have been in Scouting five or more years are more likely than other youth to say their parents' opinion is very important when selecting a club or activity in which to participate.



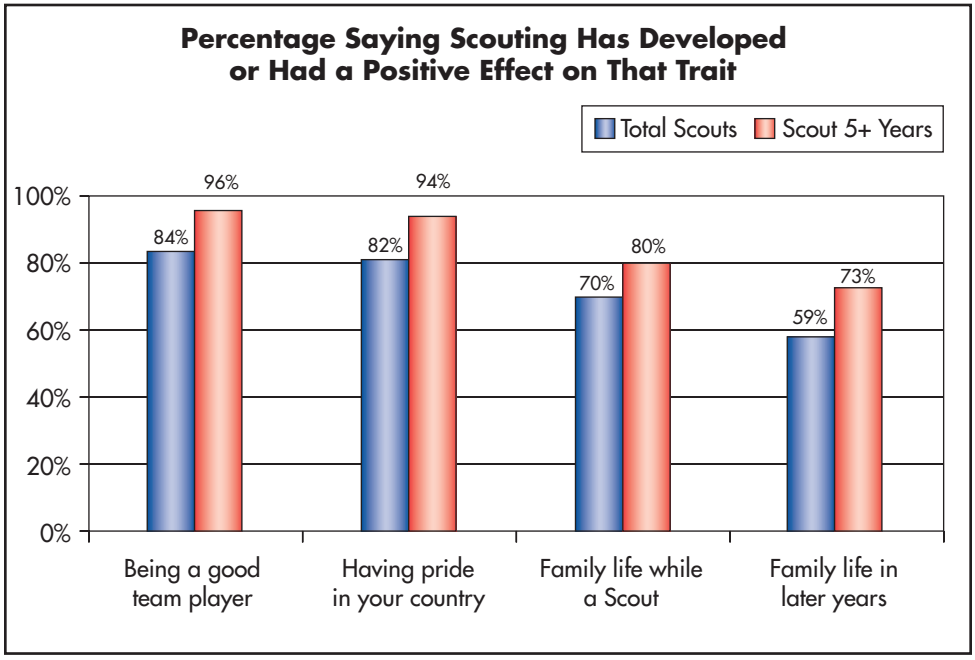
Base: 275 Scouts, 77 Scouts five-plus years, 593 non-Scouts

Loyalty to family, friends, and country built in young Scouts continues to influence men in adulthood. Men who were Scouts as youth are more likely than those who were not Scouts to say that having close family relationships is a key to happiness. Men who were Scouts are also far more likely than those who were not Scouts to have maintained lifelong friendships.



Base: 595 men who were Scouts as youth, 248 men who were Scouts five-plus years, 410 non-Scouts

Men with Scouting backgrounds also say Scouting has had a positive impact on their ability to work as a team, improved their family life at the time they were Scouts, and has helped them have a happier family life today. They also credit Scouting with building pride in their country and are more likely than men who have never been Scouts to say that voting in every election is essential to good citizenship (47 percent versus 29 percent).



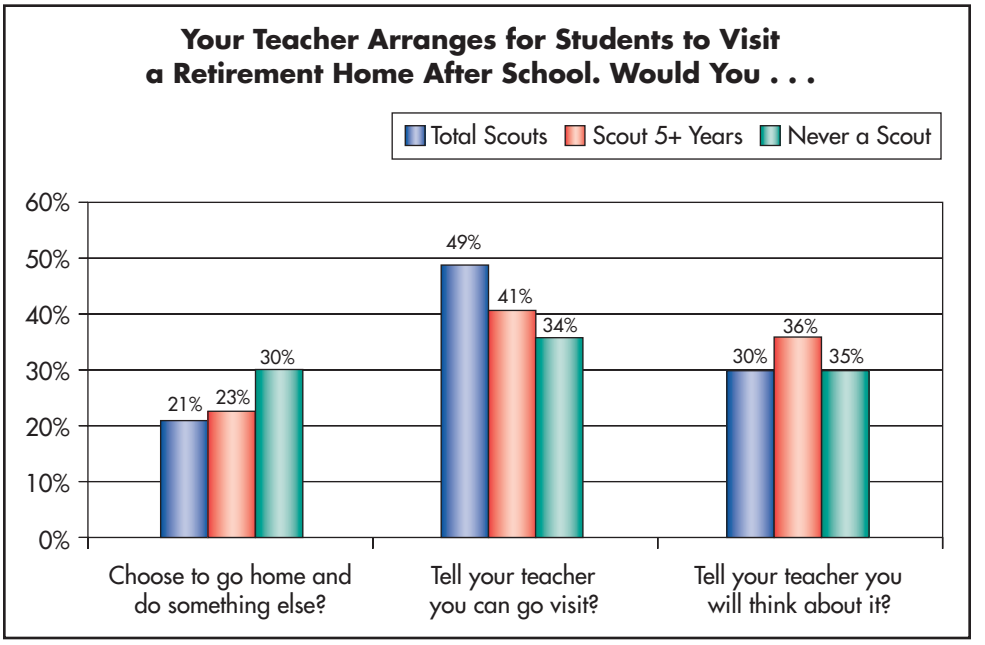
Base: 595 men who were Scouts as youth, 248 men who were Scouts five-plus years



Helpful

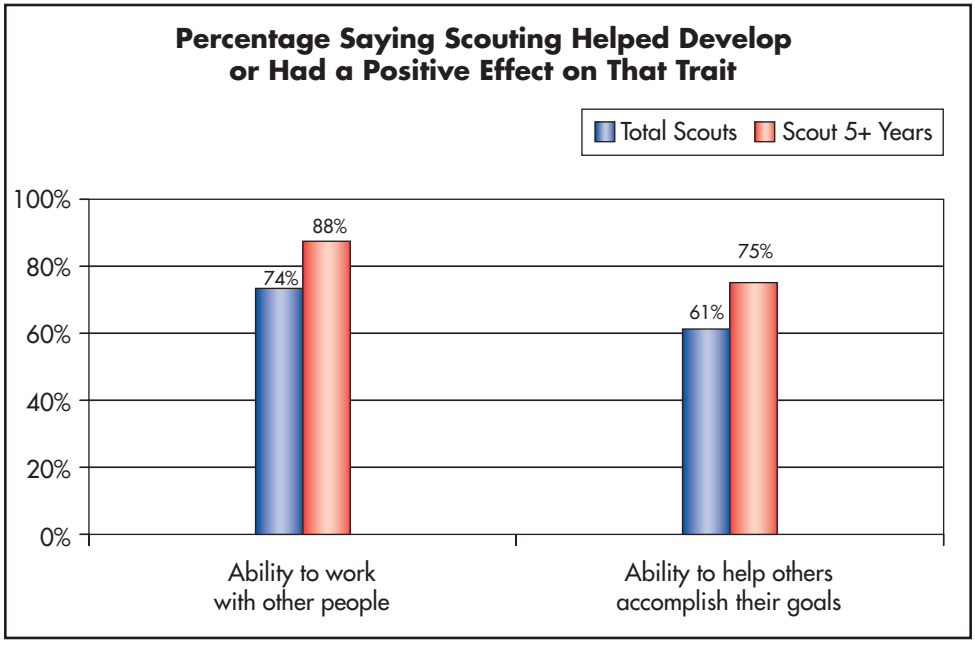
A Scout is concerned about other people. He does things willingly for others without pay or reward.

Eight of 10 youth (80 percent) who are Scouts believe that helping others should come before one's own self-interest. Scouts show their commitment to help others through their actions. Significantly more Scouts than non-Scouts say they would visit a retirement home after school. Non-Scouts are more likely to choose to go home and do something else.



Base: 275 Scouts, 77 Scouts five-plus years, 593 non-Scouts

Scouting activities teach youth the patrol method of working as a team. Men continue to use the skills they learned through the patrol method in their adult life. Because of this, men say Scouting helped them develop the ability to work with others and the ability to help others accomplish their goals.

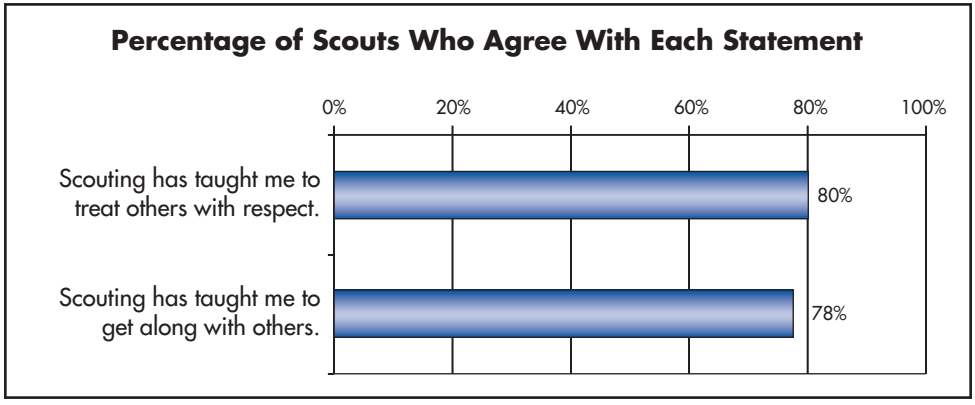


Base: 595 men who were Scouts as youth, 248 men who were Scouts five-plus years

Friendly

A Scout is a friend to all. He is a brother to other Scouts. He seeks to understand others. He respects those with ideas and customs other than his own.

Eight of 10 youth who are Scouts agree that Scouting has taught them to treat others with respect. In addition, the majority credit Scouting as helping teach them how to get along with others.

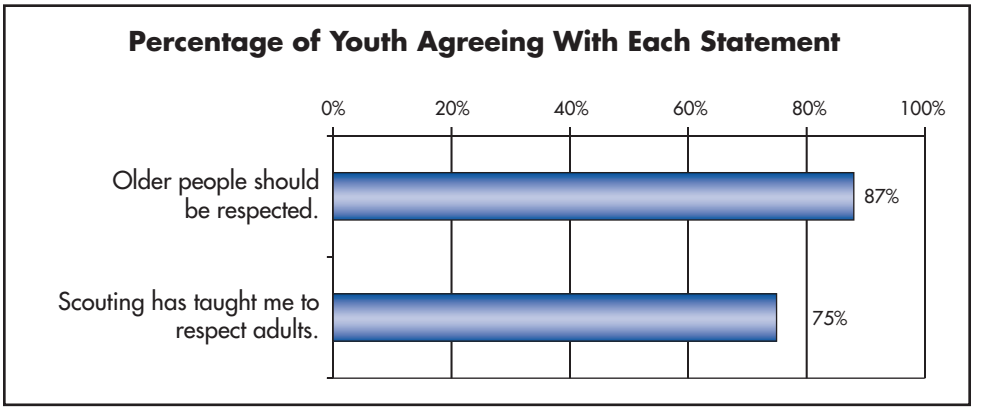


Base: 275 youth who are or were Scouts

Courteous

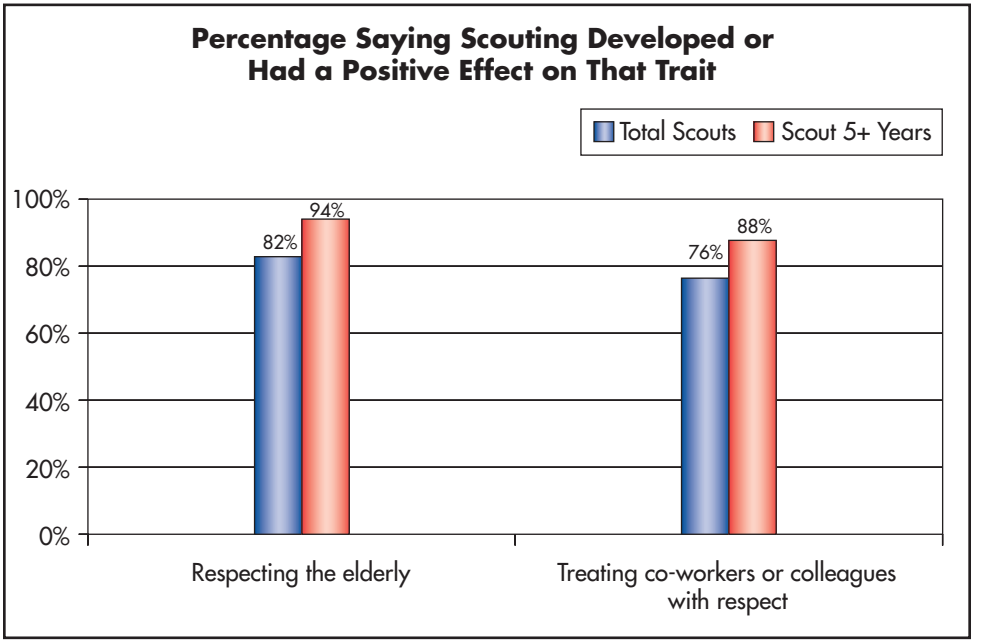
A Scout is polite to everyone regardless of age or position. He knows good manners make it easier for people to get along together.

Almost nine of 10 Scouts think older adults should be treated with respect, and most say Scouting taught them to show adults respect.



Base: 275 youth who are or were Scouts

Men who were Scouts continue to place value on showing others respect. They say Scouting taught them to respect their elders and people they work with.

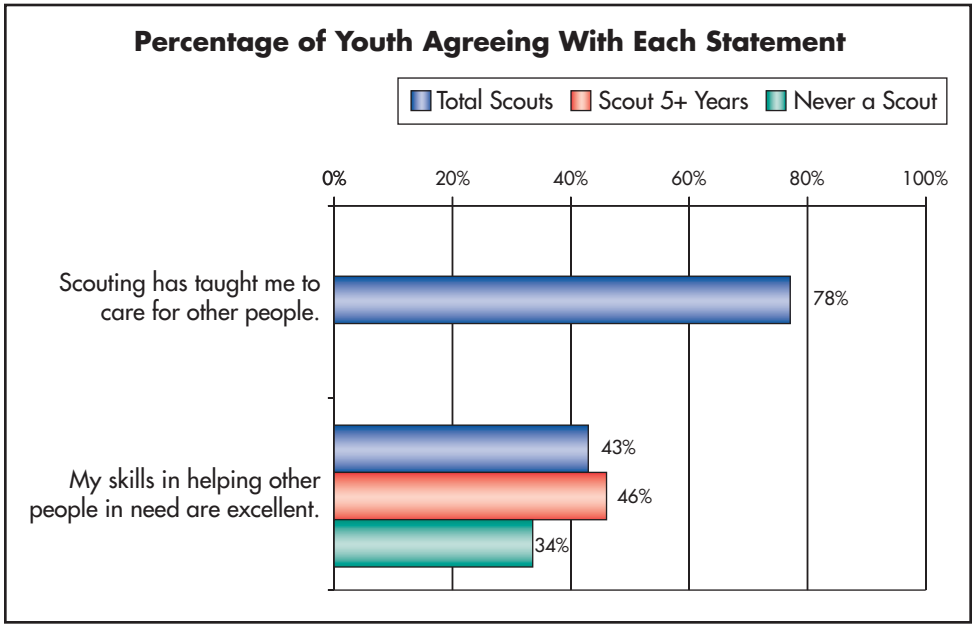


Base: 595 men who were Scouts as youth, 248 men who were Scouts five-plus years

Kind

A Scout understands there is strength in being gentle. He treats others as he wants to be treated.

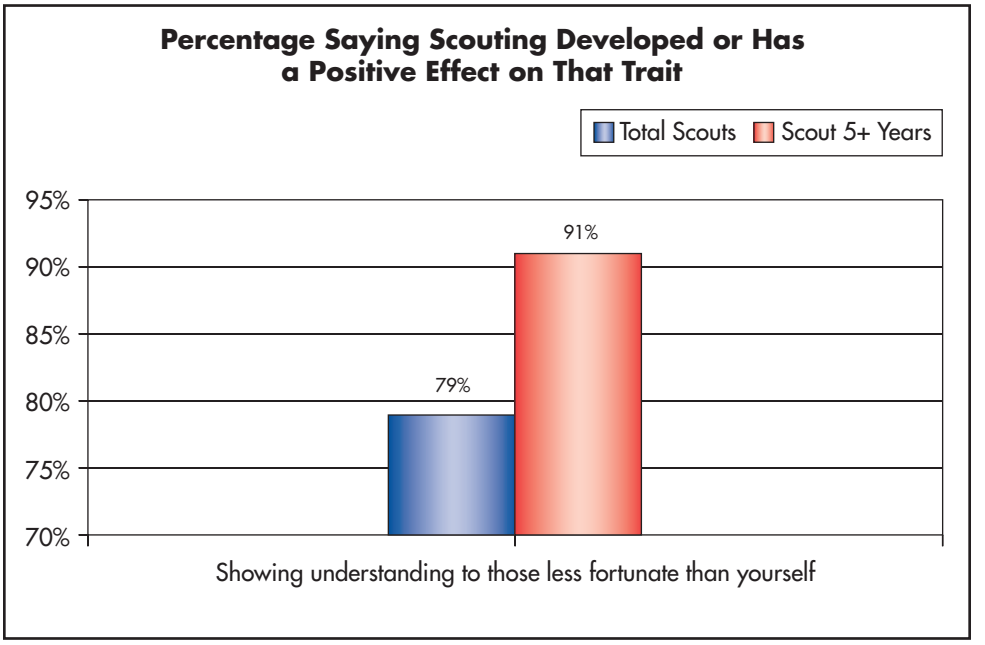
Scouting teaches youth to care for other people, and more than four of 10 Scouts (43 percent) say their skills at helping others in need are excellent, while around three of 10 non-Scouts (34 percent) say their helping skills are excellent.



Base: 275 Scouts, 77 Scouts five-plus years, 593 non-Scouts



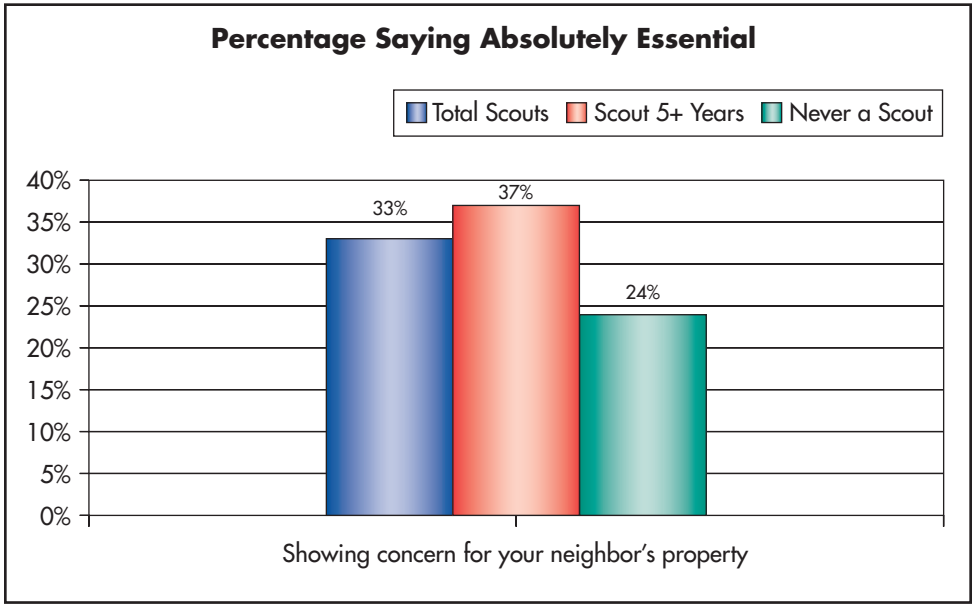
Scouting teaches service and instills the value of helping those less fortunate. Men who were Scouts, especially those who were Scouts for five or more years, say Scouting has taught them to show understanding to those less fortunate than themselves.



Base: 595 men who were Scouts as youth, 248 men who were Scouts five-plus years



Men who were Scouts are also more likely than non-Scouts to say that showing concern for their neighbor's property is an absolutely essential part of good citizenship.

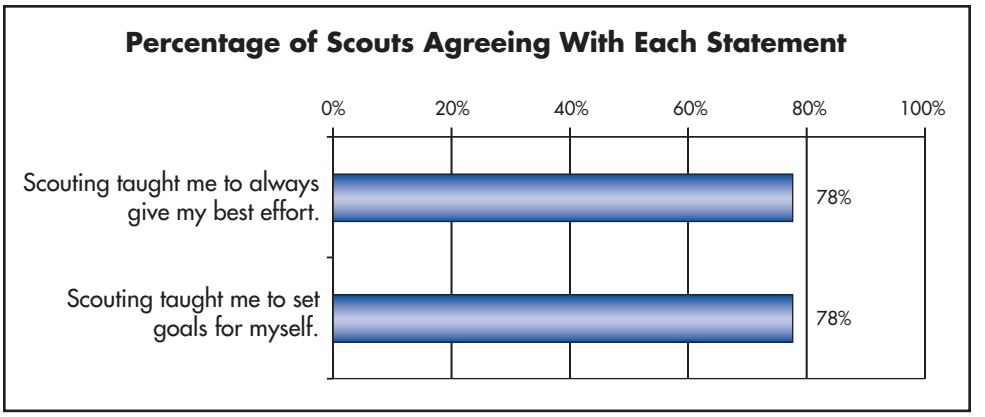


Base: 595 men who were Scouts as youth, 248 men who were Scouts five-plus years, 410 non-Scouts

Obedient

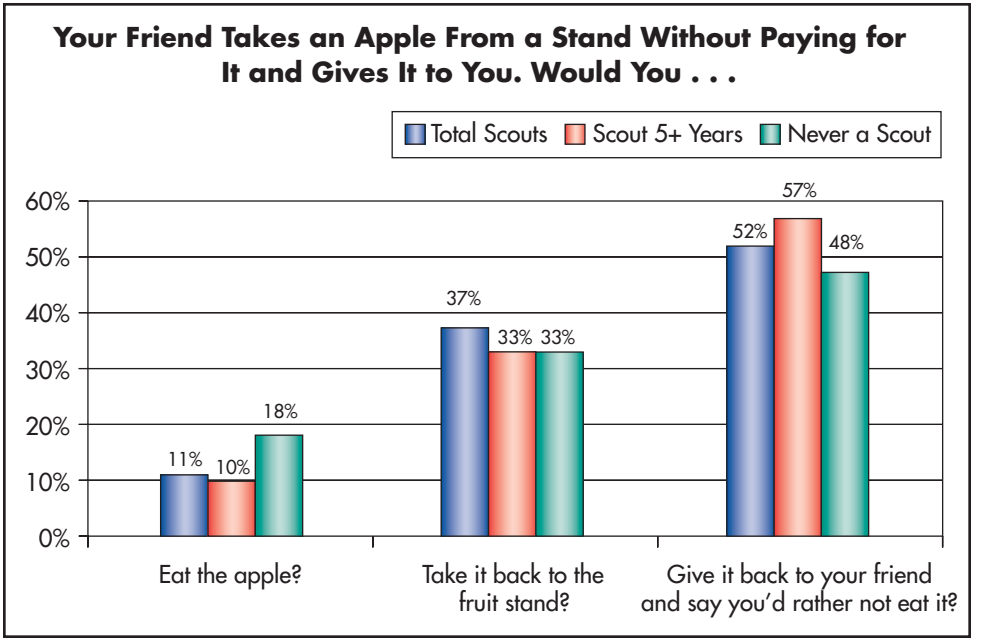
A Scout follows the rules of his family, school, and troop. He obeys the laws of his community and country. If he thinks these rules and laws are unfair, he tries to have them changed in an orderly manner rather than disobey them.

"Do my best" is near the beginning of the Cub Scout Promise and the Scout Oath. Scouts agree that Scouting teaches them to give their best effort in everything they do. They also say Scouting has encouraged them to set goals for their future.



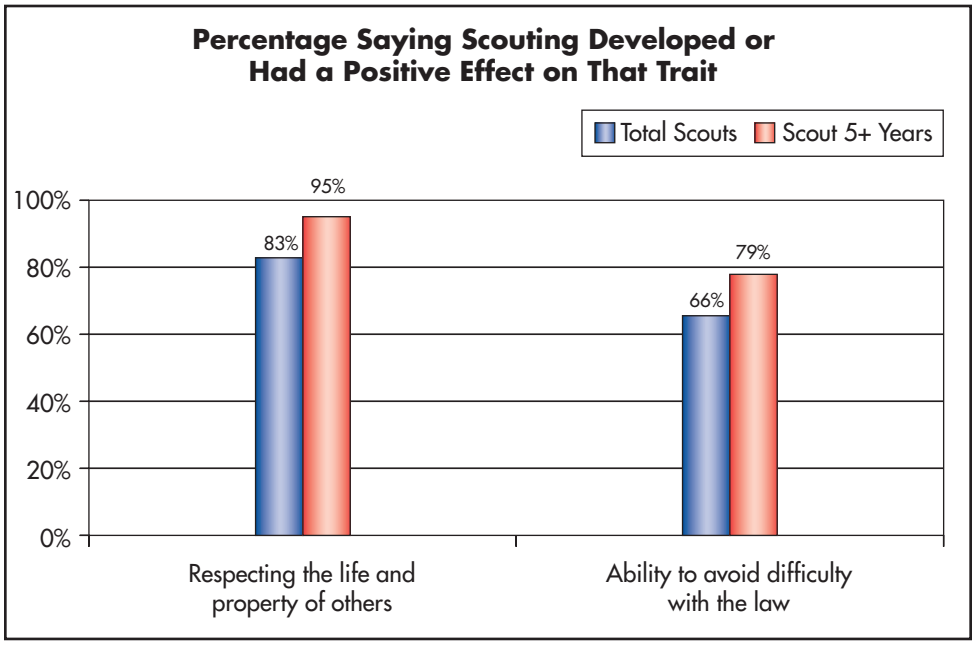
Base: 275 Scouts

Boys who have been in Scouting five years or more are better able to reject peer pressure. They are more likely than boys who have never been Scouts to say they would not hang out with youth they know commit delinquent acts, even when peer pressure from their best friend is applied (61 percent Scouts five-plus years versus 53 percent non-Scouts). They also said they would not aid or abet a friend's unlawful act, such as taking stolen property, with around 90 percent of Scouts saying they would give an apple back to the store owner or the person who stole it, compared with 81 percent of non-Scouts.



Base: 275 Scouts, 77 Scouts five-plus years, 593 non-Scouts

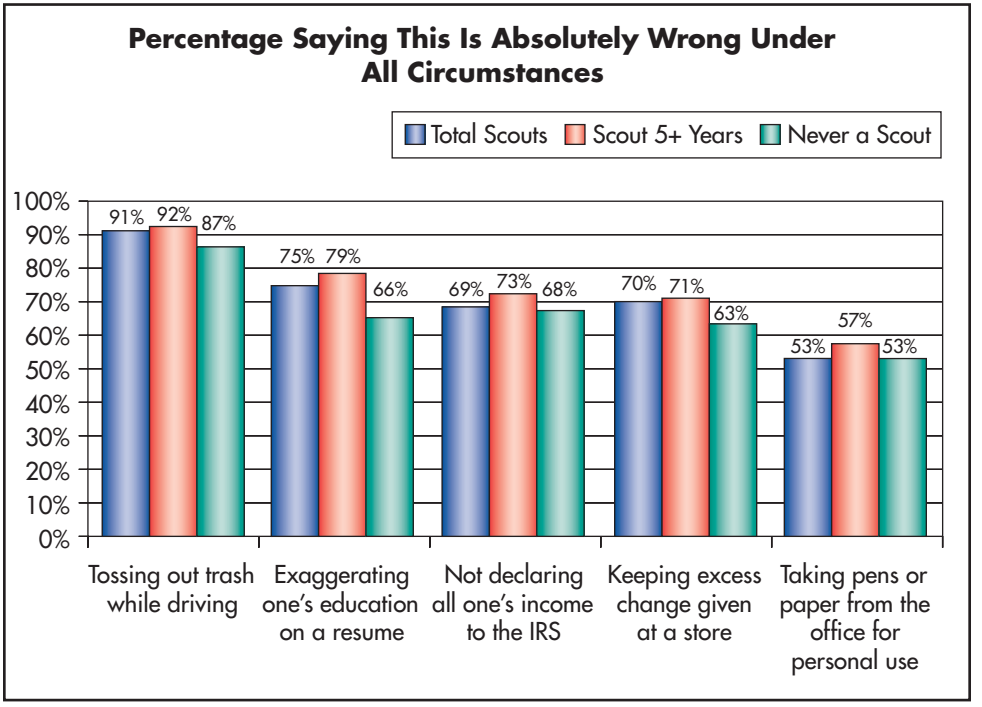
Almost all men with Scouting backgrounds say that through Scouting they learned to respect the lives and property of others. They also say the values they learned through Scouting have helped them avoid difficulty with the law.



Base: 595 men who were Scouts as youth, 248 men who were Scouts five-plus years



Scouting instills in youth and men respect for laws and doing what is ethically and morally right. A large percentage of men with Scouting experience indicate that unethical behaviors are absolutely wrong under all circumstances. This is especially true among men who were Scouts for five or more years. Men with longer tenure in the Scouting program are more likely than non-Scouts to indicate that behaviors such as tossing trash out while driving, exaggerating one's education or experience on a resume or job application, keeping excess change, and taking pens or paper from the office for personal use are absolutely wrong under all circumstances.

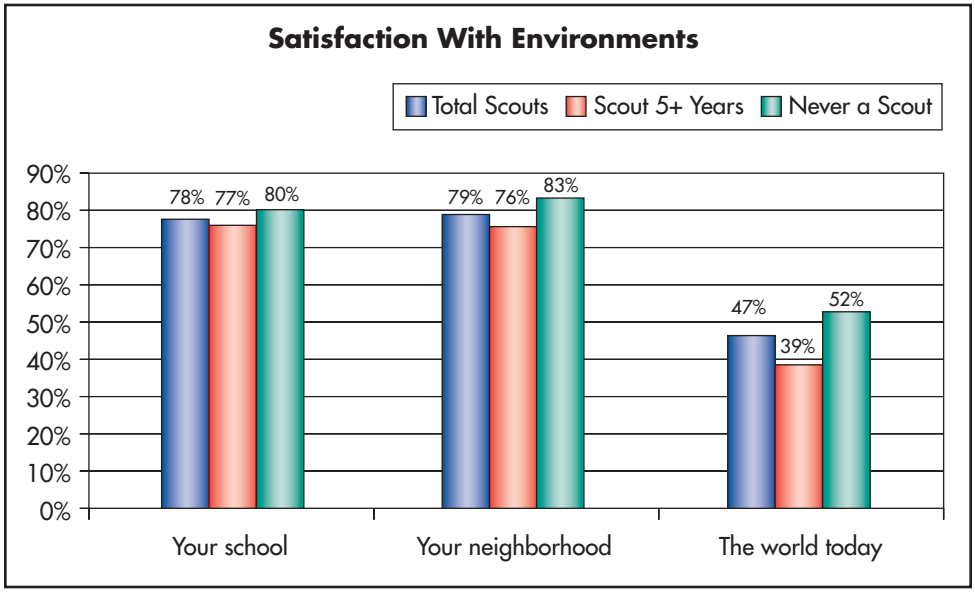


Base: 595 men who were Scouts as youth, 248 men who were Scouts five-plus years, and 410 men who were never Scouts

Cheerful

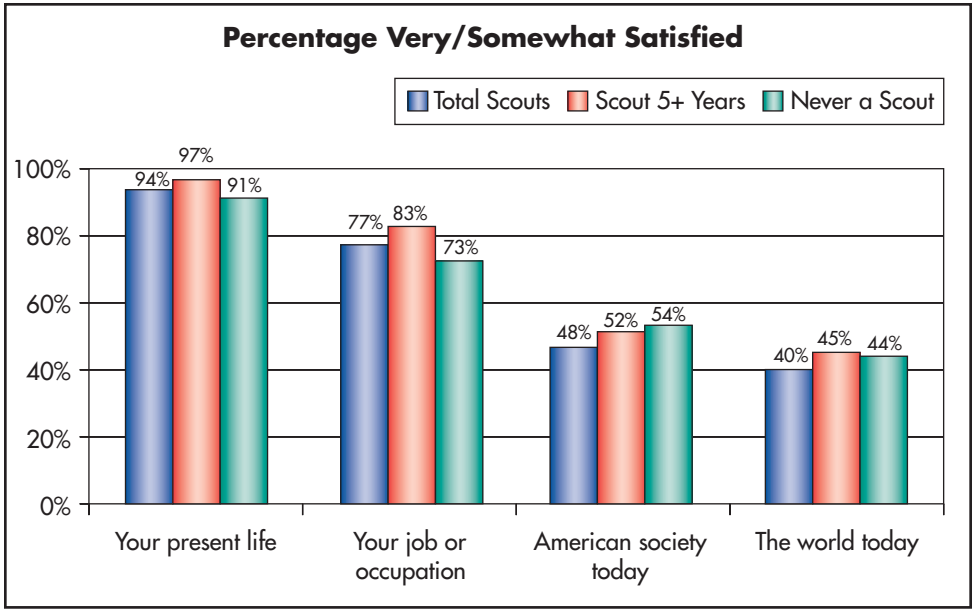
A Scout looks for the bright side of things. He cheerfully does tasks that come his way. He tries to make others happy.

Overall, Scouts are happy with their schools and their neighborhood environments. However, Scouting builds high ideals in youth. They are more likely than other youth to say they are less satisfied with the way the world is today.



Base: 275 Scouts, 77 Scouts five-plus years, 593 non-Scouts

Men who were Scouts as youth generally have a more positive outlook on life. They are more satisfied than other men with their personal lives and their jobs or occupations. However, they too have high ideals and are less satisfied with American society and the way the world is today.

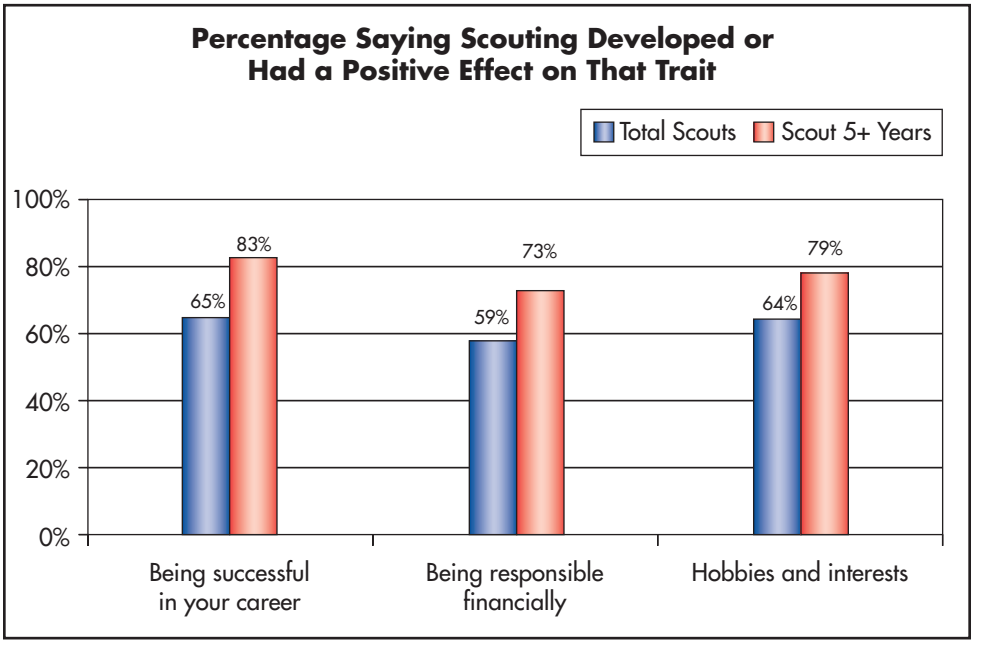


Base: 595 men who were Scouts as youth, 248 men who were Scouts five-plus years, 410 non-Scouts

Thrifty

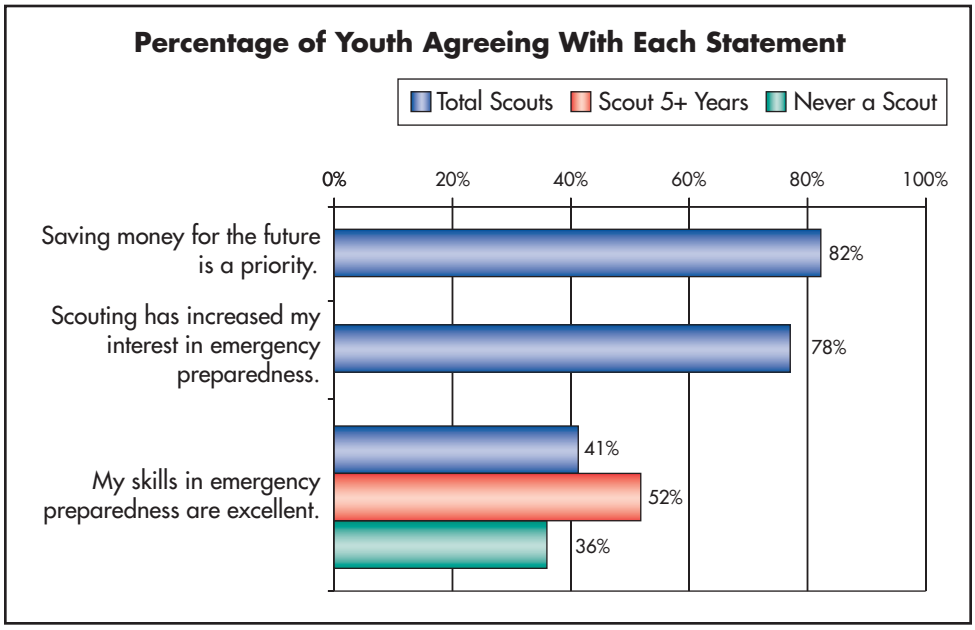
A Scout works to pay his way and to help others. He saves for unforeseen needs. He protects and conserves natural resources. He carefully uses time and property.

Men who were Scouts credit Scouting with helping them be more financially responsible. In addition, they say Scouting helped them develop hobbies and interests allowing them to more productively use their time.



Base: 595 men who were Scouts as youth, 248 men who were Scouts five-plus years

Scouts agree that Scouting teaches them to prepare for unforeseen needs. Boys who are Scouts report that Scouting has helped them save and plan for the future. More than eight of 10 Scouts (82 percent) say saving money for the future is a priority of theirs. Scouting activities have increased youths' interest in emergency preparedness, and Scouts who have been in the program for five or more years are more likely than non-Scouts to rate their emergency preparedness skills as excellent.



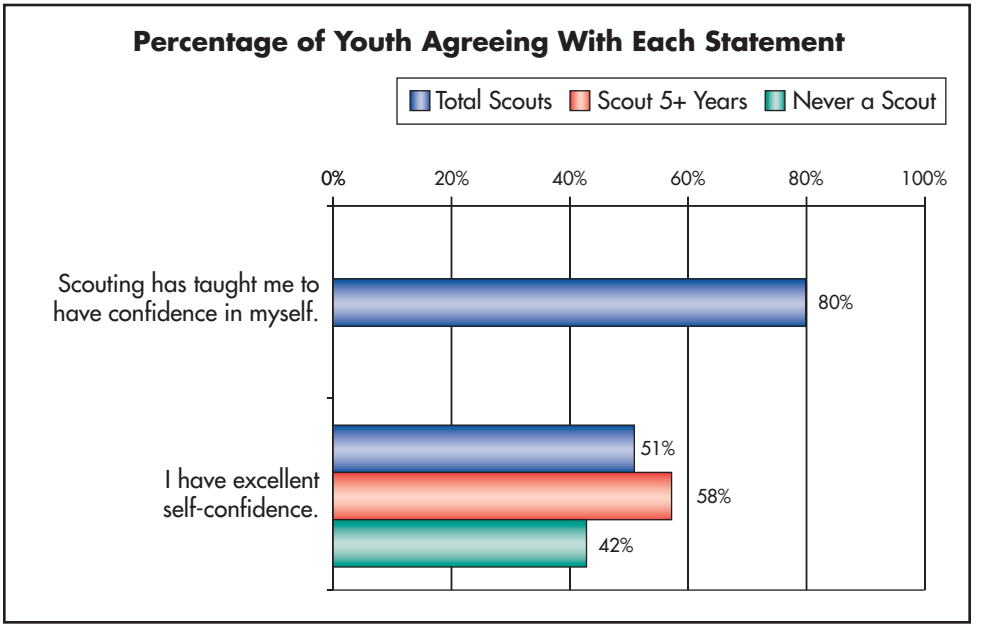
Base: 275 Scouts, 77 Scouts five-plus years, 593 non-Scouts



Brave

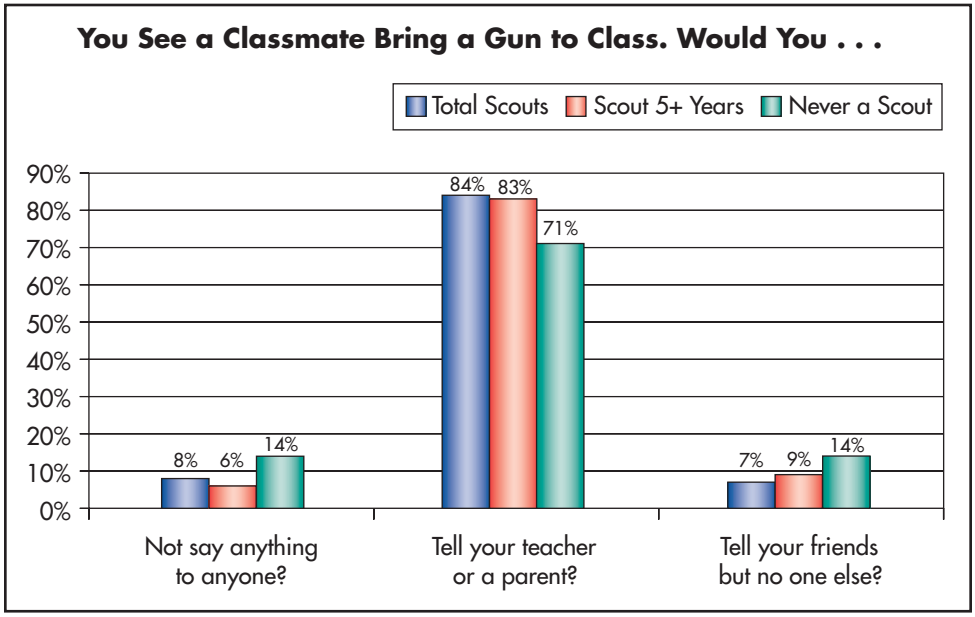
A Scout can face danger even if he is afraid. He has the courage to stand for what he thinks is right even if others laugh at or threaten him.

Scouting teaches boys to be brave and to have self-confidence so they are able to remain calm in any situation. Most Scouts, especially those with five or more years tenure, rate themselves as having excellent self-confidence. In fact, Scouts rate their self-confidence significantly higher than do boys who have never been Scouts.



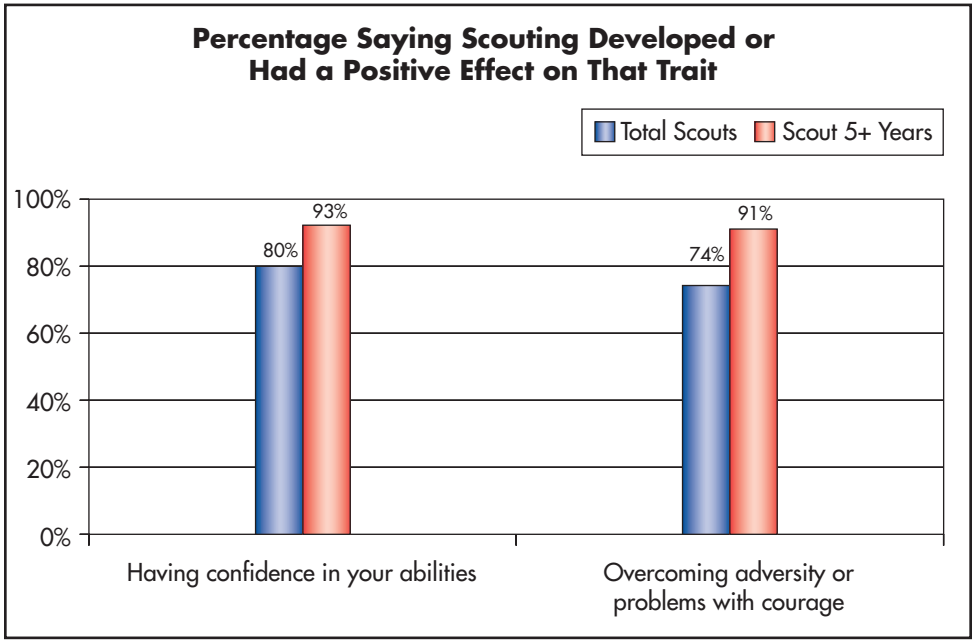
Base: 275 Scouts, 77 Scouts five-plus years, 593 non-Scouts

Scouts also act with courage. Significantly more Scouts than non-Scouts say they would report a classmate with a gun to a teacher or other adult.



Base: 275 Scouts, 77 Scouts five-plus years, 593 non-Scouts

Men with Scouting backgrounds say that through the many activities Scouting provides, Scouts build confidence in their abilities and gain the courage to overcome problems and adversity throughout their lives.

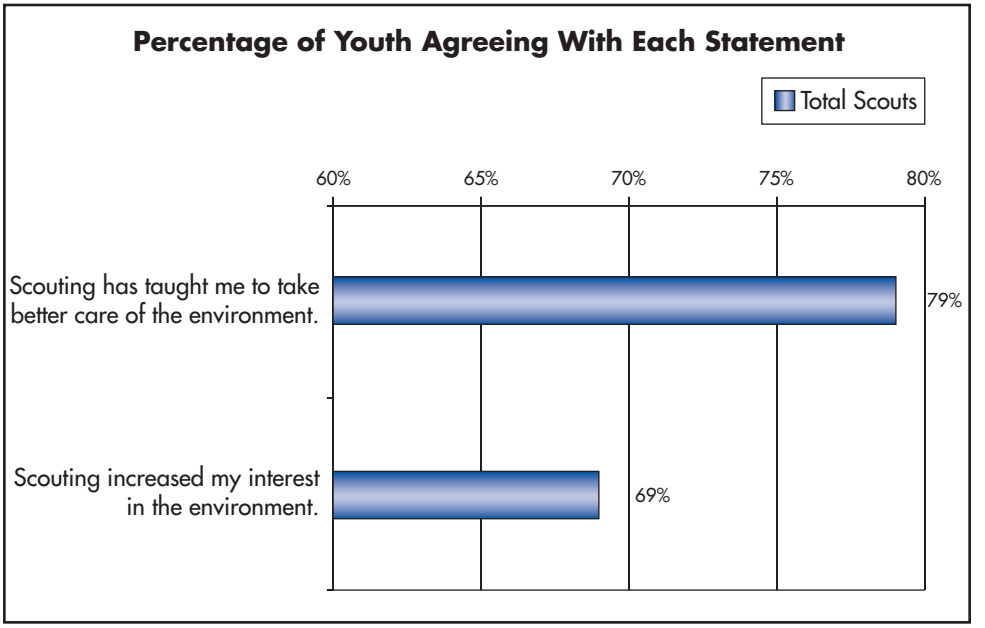


Base: 595 men who were Scouts as youth, 248 men who were Scouts five-plus years

Clean

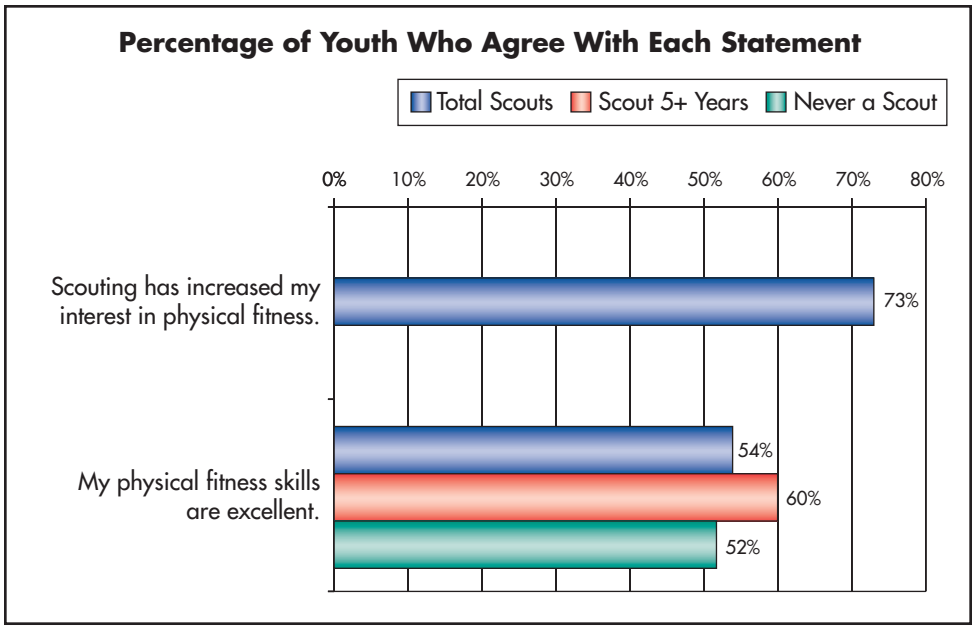
A Scout keeps his body and mind fit and clean. He goes around with those who believe in living by these same ideals. He helps keep his home and community clean.

Through Scouting activities and service projects, boys learn to respect and care for the environment. Scouting has also increased boys' interest in the environment. More than half of Scouts (53 percent) who have been in the program five or more years say preserving the environment is very important to them. Many also rate their environmental skills as excellent.



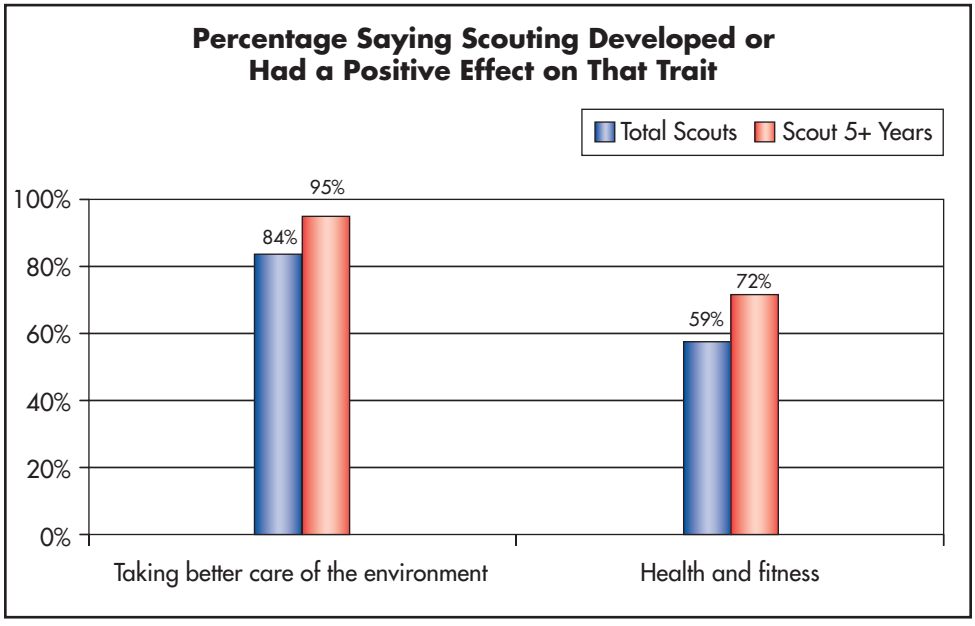
Base: 275 Scouts

Scouting handbooks emphasize healthy living and physical fitness; therefore, it is not surprising that almost three-fourths of Scouts say Scouting has increased their interest in physical fitness. More than half rate their physical fitness skills as excellent.



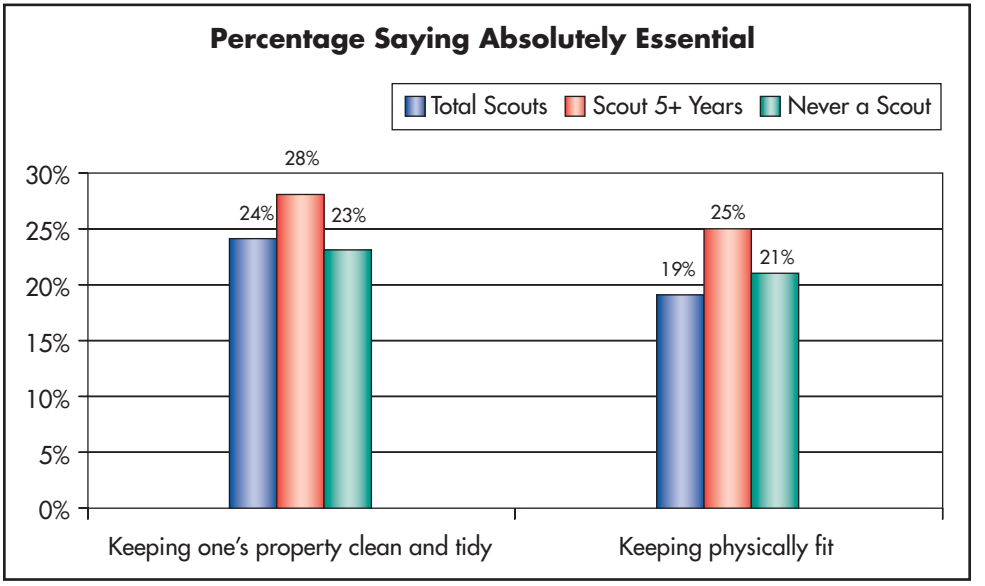
Base: 275 Scouts, 77 Scouts five-plus years, 593 non-Scouts

Like boys, men who were Scouts say environmental concern is another value they learned through Scouting. Men also say Scouting has helped them develop better health and fitness habits.



Base: 595 men who were Scouts as youth; 248 men who were Scouts five-plus years

Compared with men who were never Scouts, significantly more men who were Scouts five or more years say it is absolutely essential to keep one's property clean and tidy and to stay physically fit.

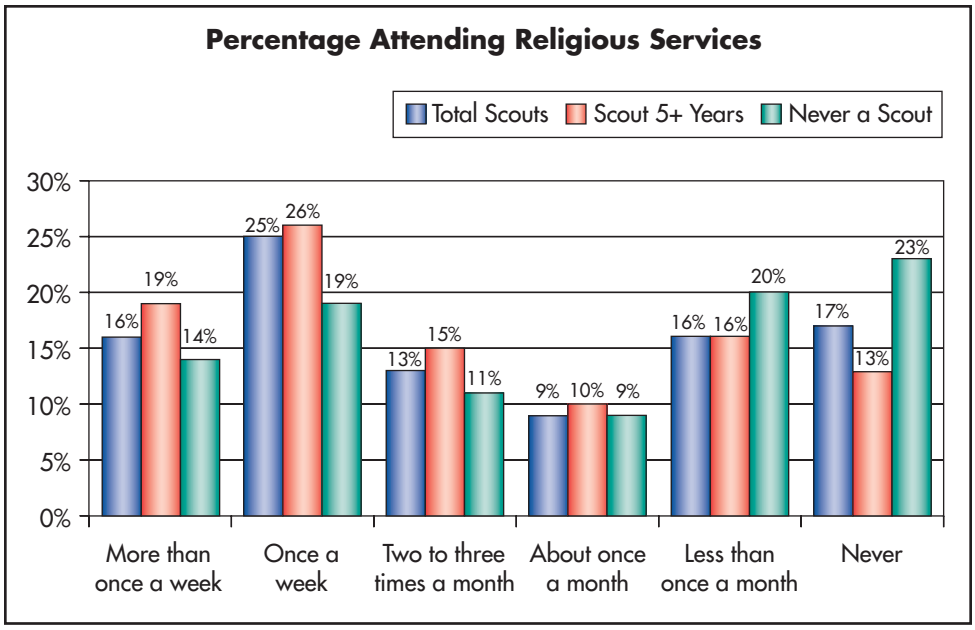


Base: 595 men who were Scouts as youth, 248 men who were Scouts five-plus years, 410 non-Scouts

Reverent

A Scout is reverent toward God. He is faithful in his religious duties. He respects the beliefs of others.

Scouting experience also influences religious service attendance. Men who were Scouts as youth attend religious services more frequently than those who were never Scouts. In fact, nearly one quarter of non-Scouts never attend, compared with 17 percent of men with Scouting backgrounds. Men who were Scouts five or more years are also more likely than men who have never been Scouts to say attending religious services together as a family (83 percent versus 77 percent) and giving financial support to religious organizations (56 percent versus 49 percent) are very important.

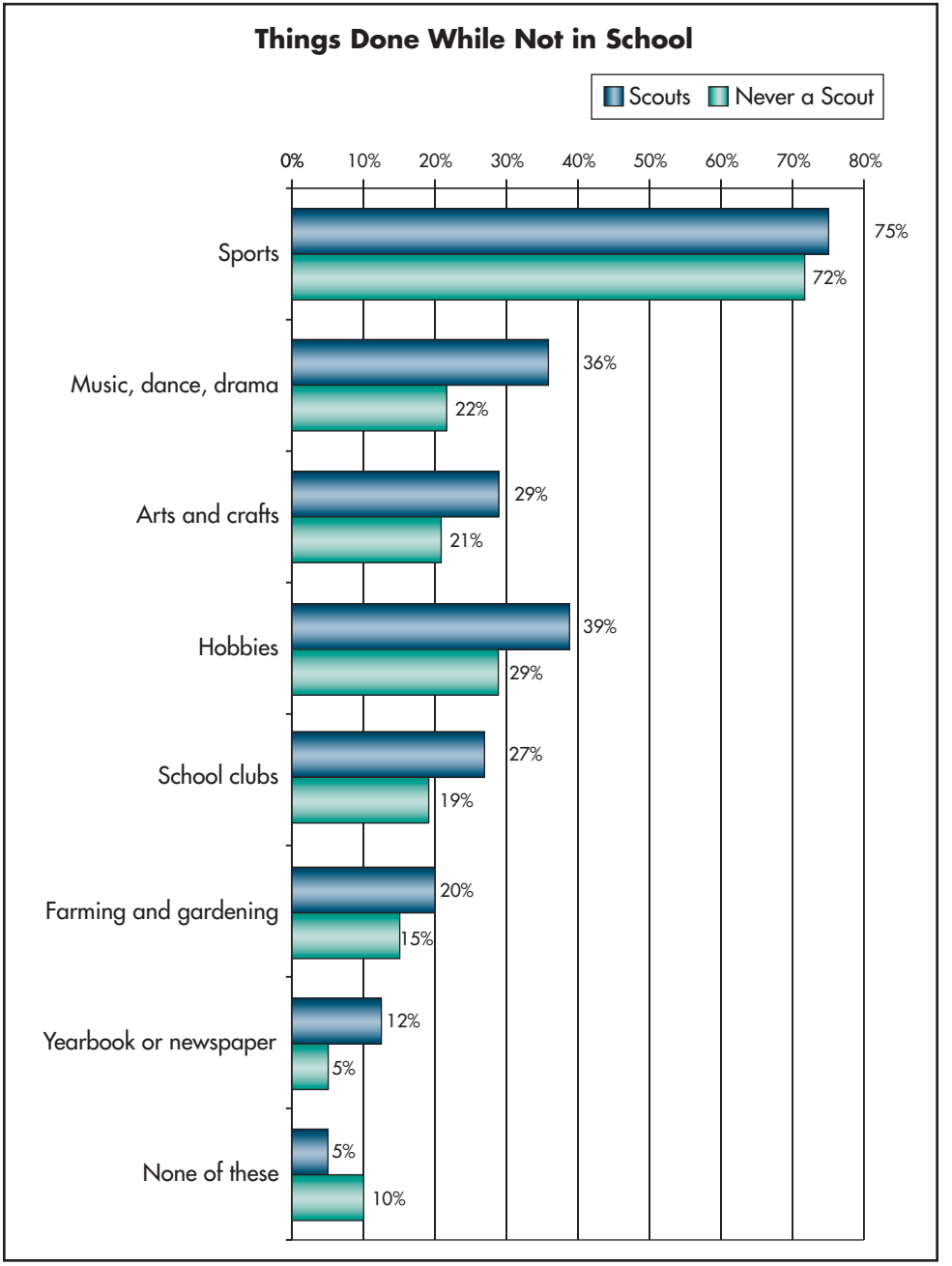


Base: 595 men who were Scouts as youth, 248 men who were Scouts five-plus years, and 410 men who were never Scouts



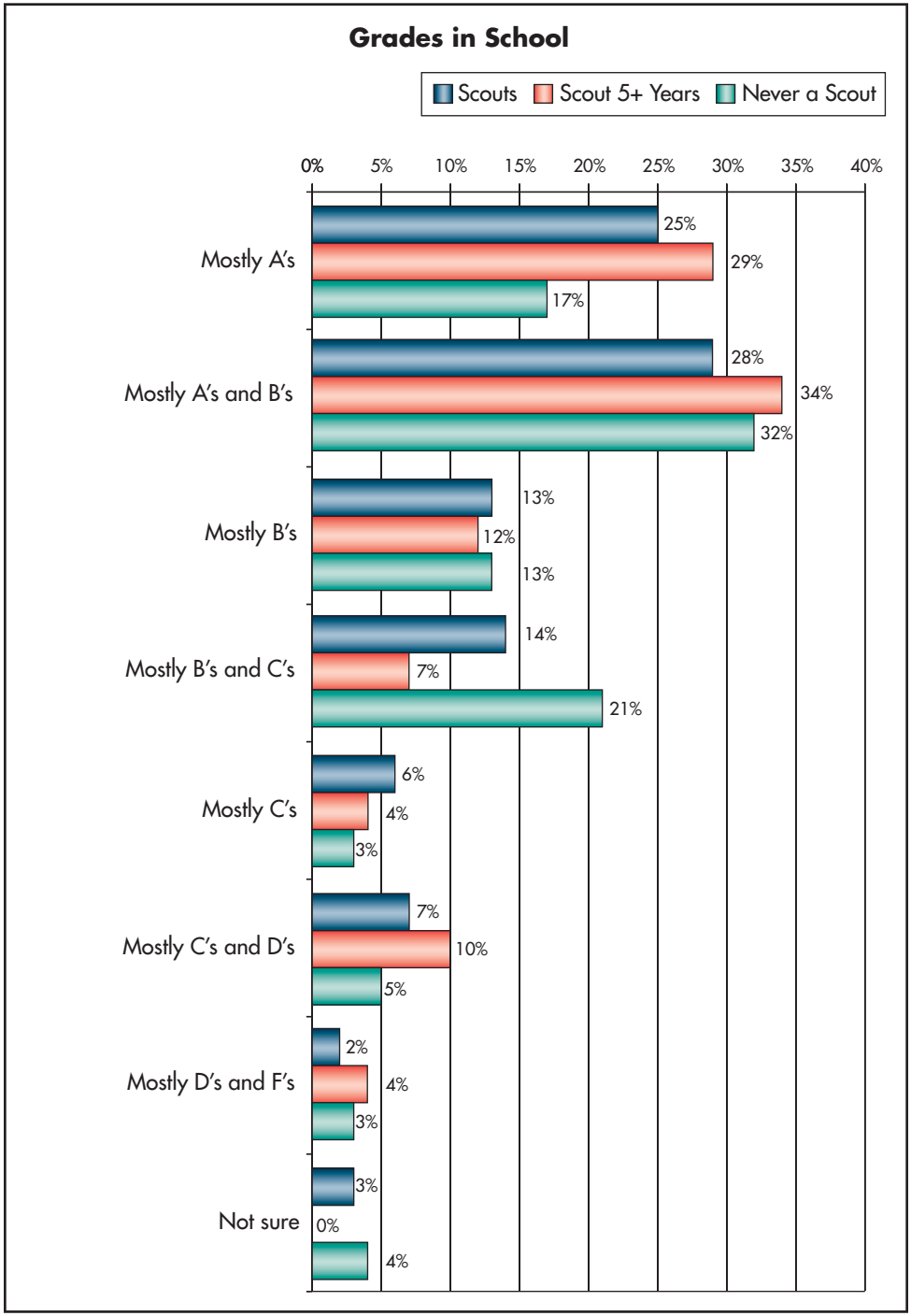
Scouting Enhances Education

Boys who are Scouts are involved in a variety of other after-school activities. In fact Scouts are more often involved in after-school activities such as sports, visual arts, or hobbies than are boys who have never been Scouts.



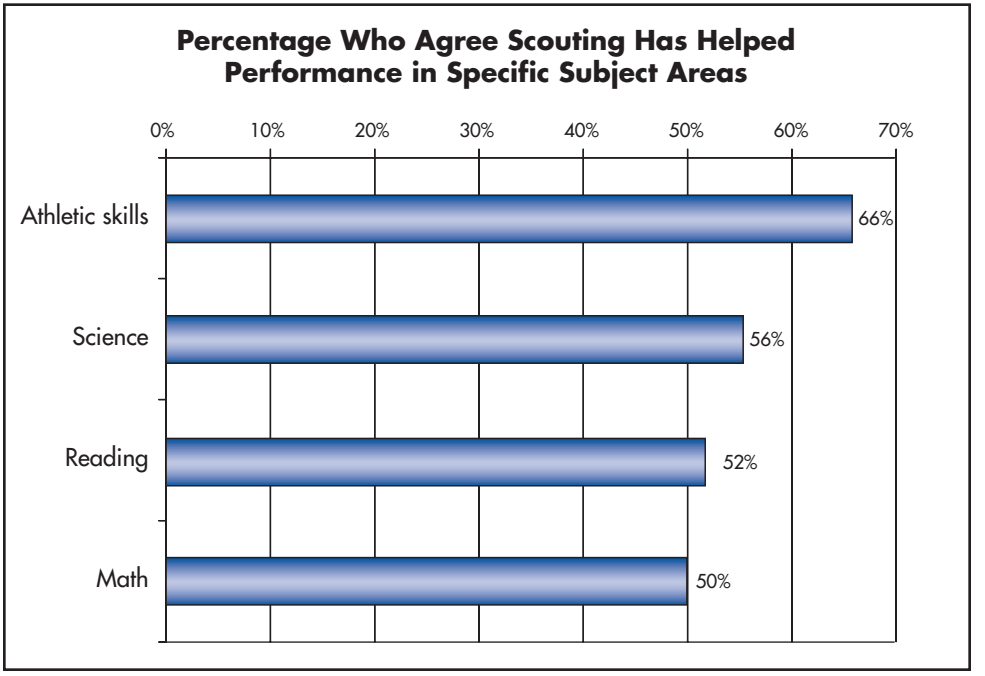
Base: 275 Scouts, 593 non-Scouts

Scouts are more likely than boys who have never been Scouts to report they earn mostly A's. This is especially true of boys who have been Scouts for five or more years.



Base: 275 Scouts, 77 Scouts five-plus years, 593 non-Scouts

More than half of all Boy Scouts agree that Scouting has improved their performance in academic and non-academic areas, particularly in athletic skills, science, reading, and math.



Base: 275 boys who are or were Scouts



Demographic Characteristics of Scouts

	Youth	Adults
Base	275	595
Race		
White	69%	79%
African American	17%	8%
Asian or Pacific Islander	5%	**
Native American or Alaskan Native	2%	2%
Other	4%	1%
Not sure	1%	**
Ethnicity		
Hispanic/Latino origin	8%	8%
Not of Hispanic/Latino origin	82%	8%
Not sure	9%	1%
Living Arrangements		
Both parents	66%	*
Mother only	8%	*
Parent and stepparent	10%	*
Mother sometimes and father sometimes	5%	*
Father only	2%	*
One parent and their companion	3%	*
Relative	1%	*
Someone else	2%	*
Marital Status		
Married	*	66%
Never married	*	15%
Divorced	*	8%
Single, but living with someone	*	6%
Widowed	*	2%
Separated	*	1%

* Question not asked of that group

** Less than 1 percent

Methodology

The study presented herein comprises two interrelated surveys: one of adult men and women, and the other with males and females in the fourth through 12th grades. Both surveys were conducted in September and October 2004.

The adult survey was administered via telephone to a random sample of 1,524 adults aged 18 and older across the United States. Of the 1,524 adults, 595 had been members of the Boy Scouts of America during their youth.

The youth survey consists of a paper survey distributed to a random sample of 1,714 youth attending public, private, and parochial schools across the United States. Of the 1,714 youth, 275 are or have been in a Scouting program.

Cub Scout Promise

I promise to do my best

To do my duty to God and my country,

To help other people, and

To obey the Law of the Pack.

Scout Oath

On my honor I will do my best

To do my duty to God and my country

and to obey the Scout Law;

To help other people at all times;

To keep myself physically strong, mentally awake,

and morally straight.

Venturing Oath

As a Venturer, I promise to do my duty to God and help strengthen America, to help others, and to seek truth, fairness, and adventure in our world.





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