



COMMUNITY IMPACT

A large, robust body of evidence demonstrates the **positive impact youth social action can have on an individual's attitudes towards their community and wider society**, including in terms of positively affecting their views of and engagement with volunteering.

A smaller body of evidence supports the **positive impact** that youth social action can have in terms of material benefits delivered to beneficiary communities.

Calls for cross-government and departmental youth social action strategies should be supported by further research into outcomes for **beneficiary communities**.

IMPACT

Robust evidence establishes the positive impact youth social action can have on an individual's attitudes towards their local community. RCTs of two social action providers found:



20% more willingness to volunteer in future, and 16% greater sense of community, on Envision programme.¹

Longitudinal analysis of City Year found **participants**

were 13% more likely to volunteer and 19% more likely to vote than comparison group.³

15% higher sense of community involvement for VAWK/IMAGO programme.²

GAPS IN THE RESEARCH

Evidence of the community impact of youth engagement remains more limited possibly because of the varied scope of what **'community benefit'** means.⁸

Evidence is perhaps weakest in terms of the **impact of youth social action on wider members of the community**, as opposed to direct beneficiaries.

There remains, however, a **need for further robust and well-resourced research** – including use of RCTs and comparison groups – on the impact of youth social action on targeted beneficiary communities, considering a wider range of areas.

This is particularly necessary to support calls for greater departmental or cross-government consideration of youth social action.

ADDITIONAL EVIDENCE

In 2012/2013, City Year members in the US provided **155,000 hours** of school-based service, and **supported 600 pupils one to one**, considerably accelerating maths and English progress in targeted students over expected grades.⁴

Economic valuations can help get a sense of wider community benefit, both direct and indirect:

The formative evaluation of v (2011) identified that for every £1 invested, it generated an equivalent value of **£5.8 through its youth volunteering.**⁵



Youth social action can also have positive impacts on social cohesion and integration:



The 2014 NCS Evaluation found that **8 in 10 participants felt more positive towards people from different backgrounds** after NCS.⁶

A 2009 report found that **45% felt that volunteering had changed their opinions of others, and 51% had started to socialise with different people as a result of volunteering.**⁷

AMBASSADOR CASE STUDY



Grace Kelly, as part of the 1st Hawkwell Girls' Brigade in Essex, does lots of fundraising for her local community. This ranges from a production she was in raising money for the homeless, to a giant sleepover to raise money for the prevention of human trafficking. All of the volunteering/fundraising activities that Grace has been involved in have not only raised her awareness of the problems different people are facing throughout the world, such as breast cancer and Alzheimer's, but it has also brought her closer to the community around her, including to those in her Girls' Brigade group.

References

¹ Kirkman E, Saunders M, Emanuel N, [Evaluating Youth Social Action, An Interim Report \(2015\)](#)

² Ibid.

³ Anderson L, Laguarda K, Williams I, [The Effect of the City Year Experience Over Time: Findings from the Longitudinal Study of Alumni \(2007\)](#)

⁴ Ockenden N, Hill M and Lloyd G, [From the East Coast to the East End: City Year UK's experience of establishing a volunteer service year \(2015\)](#)

⁵ NatCen, IVR, University of Southampton, University of Birmingham, and PublicZone, [The formative evaluation of v \(2011\)](#)

⁶ NCS, [National Citizen Service Evaluation Report \(2014\)](#)

⁷ Boeck T, Makadia N, Johnson C, Cadogan N, Salim H, Cushing J, [The Impact of Volunteering on Social Capital and Community Cohesion \(2009\)](#)

⁸ Hill, M and Russell, J [Young people, volunteering, and youth projects: a rapid review of evidence \(2009\)](#)