

## 1. Introduction

### What is Being Young in Scotland?

Being Young in Scotland (BYIS) is a biennial survey that aims to illustrate what it is like to be a young person (aged 11 to 25 years) living in Scotland. 2009 represented the fourth sweep of BYIS.

### How was VDS involved?

BYIS is a collaborative project with partners who buy into the survey. Volunteer Development Scotland (VDS) was one of six organisations who bought into the 2009 BYIS. This provided an exciting opportunity to influence the wording and content of existing volunteering questions in the core survey, and to contribute our own volunteering questions.

VDS bought five questions covering the following topics:

- Frequency of volunteering;
- Skills gained from volunteering;
- Perception of volunteering;
- Who supports young people to begin volunteering; and
- Areas young people are interested in making a difference to.

### Who participated in the survey?

BYIS comprises two surveys: a schools survey of 11-16 year olds, and a young people survey of 17-25 year olds.

A total of 1134 pupils participated in the schools survey. Data was weighted by year group (S1-S4). Consequently the four year groups were equally represented, but there are some differences in the age of participants: a small number of 11 year olds (5%) and 16 year olds (10%) were represented. Slightly more females than males participated in this survey (54% female, 46% male).

1000 young people participated in the young people survey. This data was weighted by age and gender to ensure the results were representative of Scotland. Each age group is evenly represented and there was a balanced participation by gender (49% female, 51% male).

Most participants in both surveys identified themselves as of white background. Between 4% and 6% of participants were of any other ethnic background.

### Using this report

The following report highlights some of the key findings from the BYIS 2009 survey relevant to the work of VDS. The report refers to participants in the school survey as 'pupils' and participants in the young people survey as 'young people'.

Findings are broadly organised into core volunteering findings, and findings relevant to each of the five programme areas.

## 2. Core volunteering findings

### Parental volunteering

The schools survey asked pupils about their parents' volunteering status.

- 2% of pupils indicated that their mother or stepmother volunteered.
- 1% indicated that their father or stepfather volunteered.

This figure is much lower than the Scottish Household Survey figure that 31% of adults volunteer, suggesting that pupils are not aware of their parents' volunteering.

### Current participation

All survey participants were asked if they had given up any time in the last 12 months, without pay, to help others.

- 33% of pupils (11-16 year olds) said they had
- 19% of young people (17-25 year olds) said they had

Those who had volunteered in the last 12 months were asked how often. Results were similar for both surveys.

- 21% of pupils and 26% of young people had volunteered every week.
- 51% of pupils and 51% of young people had volunteered occasionally (a few times a year or once a year).

### Future participation

49% of pupils had not given up any time in the last 12 months, without pay, to help others. Of these:

- 67% would consider doing so in the future
- 33% would not consider doing so.
- Female non-volunteers were considerably more likely to consider volunteering in the future (80%) than their male counterparts (52%).

59% of young people had not given up any time in the last 12 months, without pay, to help others. Of these:

- 37% would consider doing so in the future.
- 63% would not consider doing so.

Participants in the school survey were asked how likely or unlikely it was that they would do several listed activities when they were older and had left school.

- 22% thought they were likely to volunteer, 62% thought they were not likely to volunteer, 16% did not know.
- 15% thought they were likely to take a gap year to volunteer, 66% thought they were not likely to take a gap year to volunteer, 19% did not know.

### Perception of volunteering

Respondents were asked to identify what came to mind when they thought about volunteering. Most respondents thought positively:

- Volunteering was recognised by 89% of 11-16 year olds as 'helping people out' and 52% (n=563) associated volunteering with 'being a good citizen'.
- 66% of 17-25 year olds thought of 'helping people out' and 38% said 'a way to make a difference'.

The link between volunteering and the perception of good citizenship was not strong. When asked to identify the most important things that make someone a good citizen only 28% of pupils and 9% of young people identified volunteering as one of the most important things.

### 3. VDS programme areas

#### Environment

- 43% of pupils would be interested in making a difference to the area of the environment. This interest declined across year groups with 36% of S4 pupils interested compared to 56% of S1 pupils.
- 23% of young people (17-25) were interested in making a difference in this area.

#### Sport, arts and culture

- 47% of pupils would be interested in making a difference to the area of sport and physical recreation. Boys were significantly more likely to indicate interest in making a difference to this area than girls (males 61%, females 35%).
- 25% of young people were interested in making a difference to this area.
- 20% of pupils would be interested in making a difference to the area of art, history or cultural issues. This was relatively stable across age and gender groups.
- 10% of young people would be interested in making a difference to this area.

#### Health and wellbeing

- 32% of pupils would be interested in making a difference to the area of health issues or health promotion. 37% would be interested in making a difference for people with a disability. Girls were more interested in these areas than boys.
- 19% of young people would like to make a difference to the health issues or health promotion. 21% would be interested in making a difference for people with a disability.

#### Education, employability and learning

Those who had volunteered in the last 12 months were asked to indicate the skills that volunteering had helped them to learn or improve.

- Volunteering helped many of pupils to 'work well with a partner or in a group' (72%), 'get on well with others' (66%) and 'communicate their ideas to others' (59%).
- Volunteering helped young people to 'get on well with others' (59%), 'work well with a partner or in a group' (57%) and 'communicate their ideas to others' (52%).
- 12% of pupils and 12% of young people felt volunteering had not helped any of the skills listed.

## Connecting with communities

Those who had volunteered in the last 12 months were asked to indicate who had helped them to begin volunteering.

- Parents or guardians were the most common source of help for pupils starting volunteering (67%), followed by friends (49%, 121). Someone at the local volunteer centre was least likely to be identified as having helped pupils to begin volunteering (14%).
- Parents or guardians were also a common source of help for young people starting volunteering (39%) as were friends (32%). Someone at the local volunteer centre (10%) and someone at the local job centre (7%) were the least common sources of help.

