

Chorus Impact Study – Major findings:

Adults who sing are remarkably good citizens.

A few of the current study's major findings for adult singers include:

- Choral participation remains strong in America with 32.5 million adults regularly singing in at least one of 270,000 choruses nationwide.
- Choral singers exhibit higher levels of civic involvement, with choristers almost 3 times more likely to be officers or committee members of local community organizations such as the PTA.
- Seventy-eight percent of choral singers indicated they “at least sometimes” volunteer their time in their community, while only 50% of the general public says the same.
- Seventy-four percent of choral singers agree or strongly agree that singing in a chorus has helped them become better team leaders or team participants in other areas of their lives; nearly two-thirds agree or strongly agree that being in a chorus has helped them socialize better in other areas of their lives.
- Choral singers donate 2.5 times more money to philanthropic organizations than the general public.
- Ninety-six percent of choral singers surveyed who are eligible voters said they vote regularly in national and local elections; only 70% of the general public cites the same level of participation.

Civic engagement also extends to patronage of other art forms, with choral singers at least 2 times more likely to attend theater, opera, and orchestra performances as well as visit museums and art galleries.

The 2009 study included a new component that explicitly examined the effects choral singing has on childhood development. The results show children who sing in choirs display many of the enhanced social skills found in adult singers, substantiating earlier conclusions that singing in childhood is likely to have an enormous influence on the choices individuals make later in life. Additionally, both parents and educators attribute a significant proportion of a child's academic success to singing in a choir.

Children who sing in choruses have academic success and valuable life skills.

Several of the study's major findings for young singers include:

- There are approximately 10.1 million American children singing in choruses today.
- The majority of parents surveyed believe multiple skills increased after their child joined a chorus. Seventy-one percent say their child has become more self-confident, 70% say their child's self-discipline has improved, and 69% state their child's memory skills have improved.
- More than 80% of educators surveyed—across multiple academic disciplines—agree with parent assessments that choir participation can enhance numerous aspects of a child's social development and academic success. Educators also observe that children who sing are better participants in group activities, have better emotional expression, and exhibit better emotional management.
- Ninety percent of educators believe singing in a choir can keep some students engaged in school who might otherwise be lost—this is particularly true of educators (94%) who describe the ethnicity of their schools as diverse.
- Children who participate in a chorus get significantly better grades than children who have never sung in a choir. Forty-five percent of parents whose children sing state their child receives “all or mostly A's” in mathematics (vs. 38% of non-choir parents) and 54% get “all or mostly A's” in English and other language arts classes (vs. 43%).

The decline in choral singing opportunities for children is of concern.

While the 2009 study determined there are numerous academic and social benefits resulting from a child's participation in a chorus, it also pointed to an alarming trend suggesting that these opportunities are not available, or are being reduced or eliminated from schools across the country. More than one in four educators responded that there is no choir program in their schools. Additionally, more than one in five parents said that there were no choral singing opportunities for their children in their communities.

A conclusion of the 2003 study was that choral singing is an accessible entry point for arts exposure, with fewer barriers—economic, cultural, and educational—than posed by other art forms. This is still true today, suggesting that the decrease in choral singing opportunities in schools and communities is a missed opportunity for bolstering student achievement and engagement in their schools.

“The data in this report suggests that it would be a mistake not to leverage the benefits that choruses bring to children, adults, and the communities they serve,” observes Todd Estabrook, Chairman of Chorus America. “Simply put, if you’re searching for a group of talented, engaged, and generous community members, you would do well to start with a chorus.”

A large percentage of the American population appears to be drawn to choral singing and the desire to participate in the communal expression, creation, and performance of beautiful music. Whatever motivates choral singers to sing, the data indicates that choral singing is a thriving and growing form of artistic expression in America, and can be acknowledged not just for providing great musical performances, but for advancing many of the positive qualities associated with success in life both for children and adults.