

NEWS RELEASE

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Teen Girls' Interest in Non-Medical STEM Careers Remains Virtually Unchanged from Five Years Ago

Only 10 Percent of Survey Respondents are Interested in Non-Medical STEM Careers, Compared to 11 Percent in 2018

(Colorado Springs, CO) – A new survey of teens conducted for Junior Achievement by the research firm Big Village shows that only 10 percent of teen girls would want a job in a non-medical STEM profession after they graduate. This is in line with similar survey results in 2018 when 11 percent of teen girls had the same response. More encouragingly, teen girls' interest in the medical and dental fields was more than double that amount with 26 percent saying such professions would be of interest, like 28 percent of respondents from a similar survey in 2018. Careers in the medical and dental fields are the top choice for teen girls. In 2023, 21 percent of teen boys expressed interest in non-medical STEM compared to 28 percent in 2018. In both surveys, non-medical STEM careers were the top choice of teen boys. The survey of 1,012 13- to 17-year-olds was conducted by Big Village from September 7-12, 2023.

“These results would indicate that efforts to increase girls' interest in pursuing fields like engineering, computer science, and robotics may not be having the desired outcomes,” said Jack E. Kosakowski, President & CEO of Junior Achievement USA. “However, science and technology-focused career paths such as healthcare, dentistry, and veterinary sciences continue to be of interest to teen girls. This would seem to indicate that they are open to

careers that feature science, technology, math, and more, just not in a way that some might think of STEM careers.”

One of the factors behind this could be what appeals to girls versus boys when it comes to their ideal job. For instance, 27 percent of teen girls said the most appealing part of their dream job would be the ability to help people, which was their top choice. For teen boys, 26 percent said that the most appealing part of their dream job would be that they would be good at it, which was their top choice.

Junior Achievement learning experiences emphasize STEM careers at many grade levels to help introduce various professions to students of all ages. These learning experiences can be reinforced by volunteer professionals who work in STEM fields and can share their experiences with students while serving as role models.

Additional findings include:

- Despite recent debate around the value of college degrees, 87 percent of teens agree that “colleges do a good job of preparing students to have successful careers.”
- Teens say the biggest influence on them choosing their dream job is their parents (28%), followed by societal influencers, such as social media influencers (12%),
- Nearly half of teens (46%) said they are changing their career plans based on economic factors in America. This compares to slightly fewer teens (40%) in 2018.

Methodology

This Youth CARAVAN survey was conducted by Big Village among a sample of 1,012 13-17-year-olds. This survey was live on September 7-12, 2023.

Respondents for this survey were selected from among those who have volunteered to participate in online surveys and polls. All sample surveys and polls may be subject to multiple sources of error, including, but not limited to sampling error, coverage error, error associated with nonresponse, error associated with question wording and response options, and post-survey weighting and adjustments. It is nationally representative with set quotas based on census data. The 1,012 completes are all who qualified and completed based on the demographic quota requirements. The MoE is +/- 3.1%.

About Junior Achievement USA

Junior Achievement is the world's largest organization dedicated to giving young people the knowledge and skills they need to own their economic success, plan for their future, and make smart academic and economic choices. JA programs are delivered by corporate and community volunteers and provide relevant, hands-on experiences that give students from kindergarten through high school knowledge and skills in financial literacy, work readiness, and entrepreneurship. Today, JA reaches more than 4.4 million students per year in 102 markets across the United States as part of 12.5 million students served by operations in more than 100 other countries worldwide. Junior Achievement USA is a member of JA Worldwide. For more information, visit www.ja.org.