



4 Why should we be more involved?

■ Why Participate

A democratic society is based on the belief that all citizens have a voice in decision-making about the ways they live and work together. However, individuals have differing perspectives about how and when they should participate politically.



Why do you think some people choose to vote and others do not? Explore the following list of reasons. Rank each reason in the order that you think is most common. Compare your ranking with two of your classmates.

Rank	Common Reasons for Voting	Rank	Common Reasons for Not Voting
	<p>To exercise the right – we live in a democracy and we have the right to vote – why not use it</p> <p>Out of duty – many people feel that it is their job as citizens to participate in elections</p> <p>To support a particular candidate or their political party</p> <p>To have a voice – to have a say in how things are done</p> <p>To change things, to make a difference</p> <p>The system does not work if people do not vote</p>		<p>Do not have time</p> <p>Forget</p> <p>Have to work</p> <p>Do not like any of the choices</p> <p>Do not know who to vote for</p> <p>Out of town</p> <p>Not interested</p> <p>Do not think it matters</p> <p>Do not know when or where to vote</p>

Push is on to get young Alberta voters to the polls

Fletcher Kent Global News

October 15, 2015

Younger students may be unable to vote, but there is a push to involve them in the election as well.

Grade 9 students at Edmonton's Sir John Thompson Junior High School cast ballots as part of Student Vote. The national campaign is designed to expose Canadian youth to the voting process.

Teacher Joseph Filipic said such exposure will eventually help increase youth voter turnout.

"The younger they're exposed to the voting process, the more likely that they'll continue to vote. It'll become a habit when they are legally able to vote."

The 13 and 14-year-olds taking part this year said the campaign issues interest them and so do the discussions about them.

Mateo Skeljo said dinner conversations have recently changed. His parents argue about politics. Now he is joining in.

"It's been fun getting in fights together," he said.

Skeljo said he'll vote when he has the chance. Many of his classmates said they will as well.

One Grade 9 student at the school is making a difference this election. Hazel Diamono-Mensah's parents recently became Canadian citizens. They have not voted before and did not plan to vote in the 2015 federal election.

Diamano-Mensah told them how important voting is. Now both her parents have promised to cast a ballot on Monday which makes the 14-year-old "happy and [excited] because at least, even though I can't vote, my parents can vote and they can make Canada a better place."

Kent, Fletcher (October 15, 2015). *Push is on to get young Alberta voters to the polls*. Global News <http://globalnews.ca/news/2276974/push-is-on-to-get-young-alberta-voters-to-the-polls/>

Find Out More



Find other information about voting ages in the **Participation Matters** section of the **Building Future Voters** junior high webpage at www.buildingfuturevoters.ca.



Pause and Reflect

Do you think it is necessary to vote to be considered an active, engaged citizen? Why or why not?

What are other effective ways to be an active, engaged citizen?
