



## Community Strength

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## Valued Conditions Expressed by King County Residents

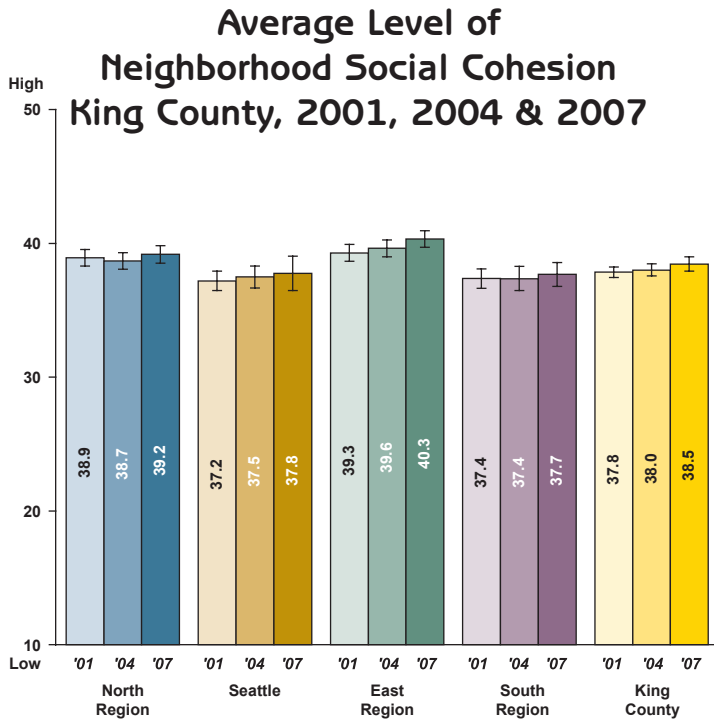
- Everyone feels included; no one is isolated. Neighbors know each other's names and get together often. A lot of talk between neighbors.
- People show respect for and interest in others who are of different ages, educational, social and ethnic backgrounds.
- Neighbors depend on each other: borrowing and lending, watching out for each other's children, homes, gardens, and pets. There is trust.
- People organize within the community/neighborhood: block watches, neighborhood directories and associations.
- People invest in the community: keeping it clean, organizing mentoring and other youth development activities, supporting public parks, libraries, community centers.
- People are informed and engaged in their community: volunteering, staying aware and well-informed of community issues, planning and attending community events.
- People are active participants in community events and the political process. They believe that what they do can make a difference in community life.
- People honor and show interest in the cultural/religious heritage of others.
- People share their common heritage and interests: language, religious observance or cultural practice. They have opportunities to gather with people who are like them.
- People of different generations frequently interact and do things together.
- Immigrants receive assistance to improve their knowledge of English. Immigrants are empowered in other ways—training, involvement in community organizations, etc.
- There is diversity in neighborhoods: elderly and single people living among families, single family dwellings among multi-family dwellings; shops among residences, low cost housing among higher cost housing.

The valued conditions came from citizen opinion expressed as values and concerns in the telephone survey, focus groups, and in the civic and public forums. The valued conditions are expressed as "ideal" conditions—based on the vision of what residents want for themselves, their families and communities.

# Neighborhood Social Cohesion

Social cohesion refers to mutual trust among neighbors combined with willingness to intervene on behalf of the common good. Research suggests that rates of violence are lower in neighborhoods with higher social cohesion.

- Social cohesion was measured by asking King County adults 5 questions about trust in their neighborhood and 5 questions about the likelihood that neighbors might intervene in problem situations. Answers were combined to create a social cohesion scale with a possible score between 10 (Low) and 50 (High).
- In 2007 the average social cohesion score for adults in King County was 38.5. The level of social cohesion did not change significantly between 2001 and 2007.
- Social cohesion levels reported in 2007 by residents of East Region were significantly higher than by residents of South Region, Seattle, and King County and similar to North Region.



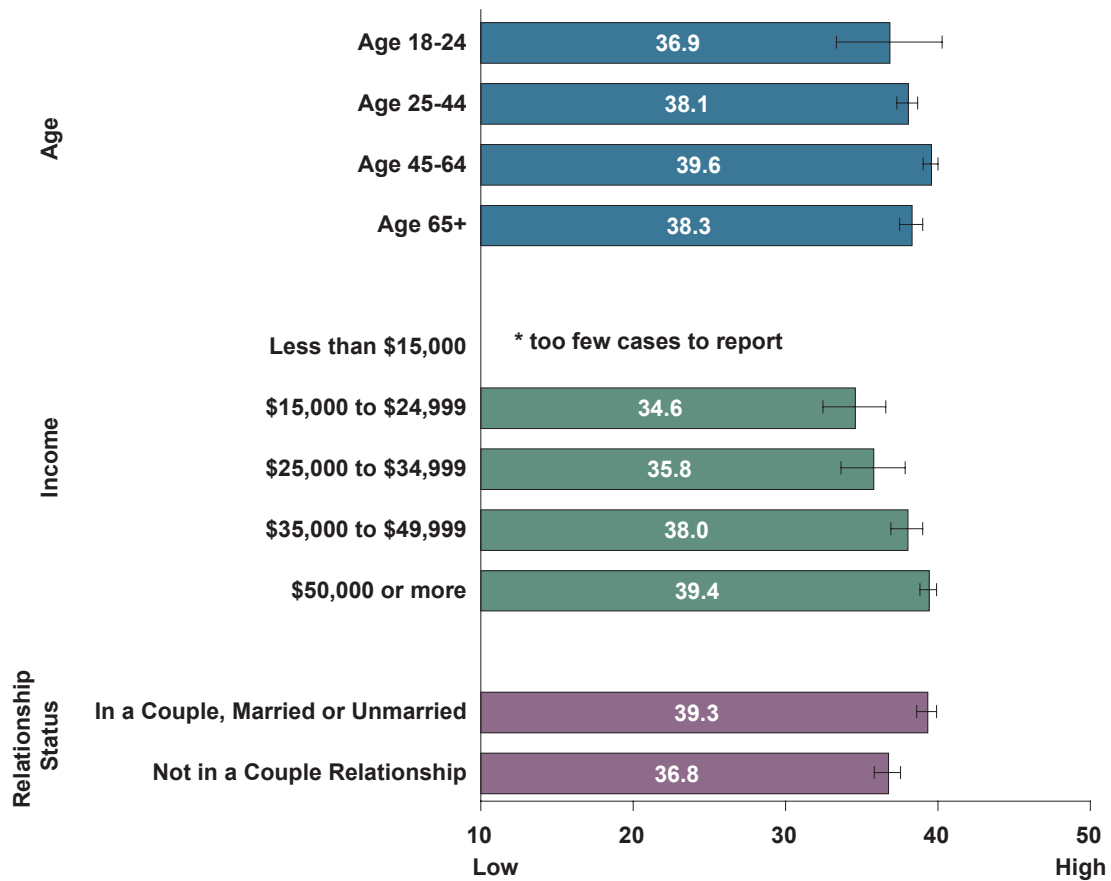
## Percent of Adults Who Report High Social Cohesion in Their Neighborhoods King County, 2001, 2004 & 2007

How strongly do you agree or disagree with the following statements:	Percent Answering Strongly Agree or Agree														
	North Region			Seattle			East Region			South Region			King County		
	'01	'04	'07	'01	'04	'07	'01	'04	'07	'01	'04	'07	'01	'04	'07
...This is a close-knit neighborhood.	53%	57%	60%	49%	47%	52%	55%	61%	65%	57%	57%	55%	53%	54%	57%
...People in this neighborhood can be trusted.	89%	86%	90%	78%	80%	83%	86%	90%	91%	74%	77%	77%	79%	82%	83%
...People around here are willing to help their neighbors.	86%	89%	89%	82%	82%	79%	86%	90%	93%	81%	80%	85%	83%	84%	85%
...People in this neighborhood do not share the same values (reversed for scale).	22%	19%	15%	25%	20%	23%	21%	14%	11%	26%	29%	29%	24%	22%	22%
...People in this neighborhood generally don't get along with each other (reversed for scale).	5%	5%	7%	4%	7%	6%	6%	4%	4%	9%	11%	11%	6%	8%	8%

Would you say it is very likely, likely, unlikely, or very unlikely that your neighbors could be counted on to intervene or do something if:	Percent Answering Very Likely or Likely														
	North Region			Seattle			East Region			South Region			King County		
	'01	'04	'07	'01	'04	'07	'01	'04	'07	'01	'04	'07	'01	'04	'07
...children were skipping school and hanging out in the neighborhood?	65%	62%	65%	50%	55%	55%	63%	70%	72%	60%	59%	66%	57%	60%	64%
...children were spray-painting graffiti on something in the neighborhood?	91%	89%	89%	80%	83%	84%	90%	91%	89%	85%	85%	84%	85%	86%	86%
...children were showing disrespect to an adult?	65%	61%	61%	52%	52%	53%	64%	64%	71%	62%	61%	64%	59%	59%	62%
...a fight broke out in front of their house?	83%	81%	83%	75%	79%	81%	85%	86%	88%	78%	81%	82%	79%	82%	83%
...the fire station closest to their home was threatened with budget cuts?	74%	75%	73%	66%	68%	71%	69%	69%	75%	66%	65%	70%	67%	68%	72%

## Average Level of Neighborhood Social Cohesion By Age, Income, and Relationship Status King County, 2007



- People ages 45-65 saw more social cohesion in their neighborhoods than those ages 25-44 or 65 and older.
- People with incomes of \$50,000 or higher reported higher levels of social cohesion in their neighborhoods than those with household incomes of \$35,000 or less.
- People who were in a couple relationship (either married or unmarried) saw higher social cohesion than those who were separated, divorced, widowed or never married.
- A perception of social cohesion did not vary by race/ethnicity, gender or education.

### Data Source, Definitions, and Limitations

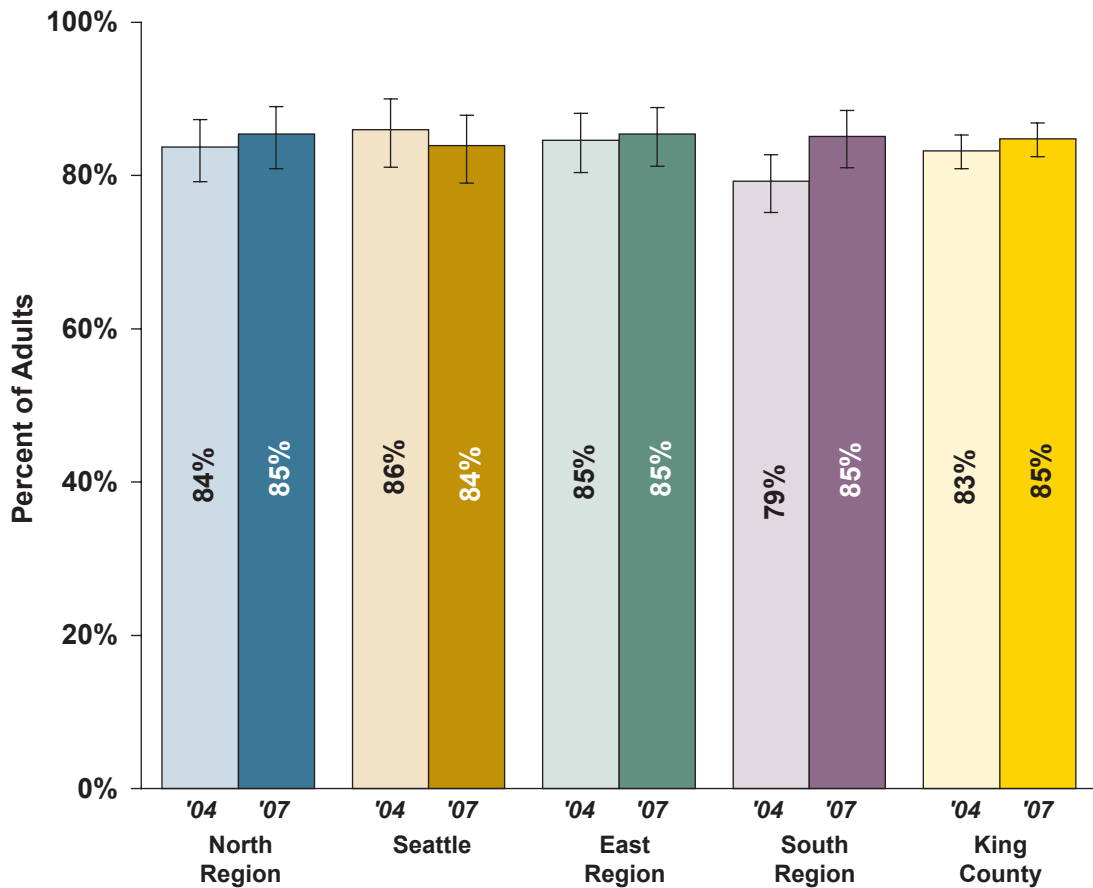
The neighborhood social cohesion measures are from the King County Community Health Survey, 2001, 2004, and 2007, which used questions on trust and informal social control from the study "Neighborhoods and Violent Crime: A Multilevel Study of Collective Efficacy", Science 15 August 1997:Vol. 277. no. 5328, pp. 918 - 924 (RJ Sampson, S Raudenbush, and F Earls). This telephone survey of adults living in King County was conducted in Spanish as well as English for the first time in 2007.

The limitations of an English-and-Spanish-only telephone survey include the following: a) people who do not have a land line telephone or who do not speak English or Spanish are excluded, and b) people who have less education and lower incomes are underrepresented.

# Involvement in Community Organizations

Communities are strengthened when many people are engaged in activities that benefit more than themselves as individuals. Working together for the common good of neighborhoods, faith communities, schools or a political cause fosters civic responsibility and a sense of reciprocity.

Percent of Adults Who Are Very or Somewhat Active in One or More Community Organizations  
King County, 2004 & 2007



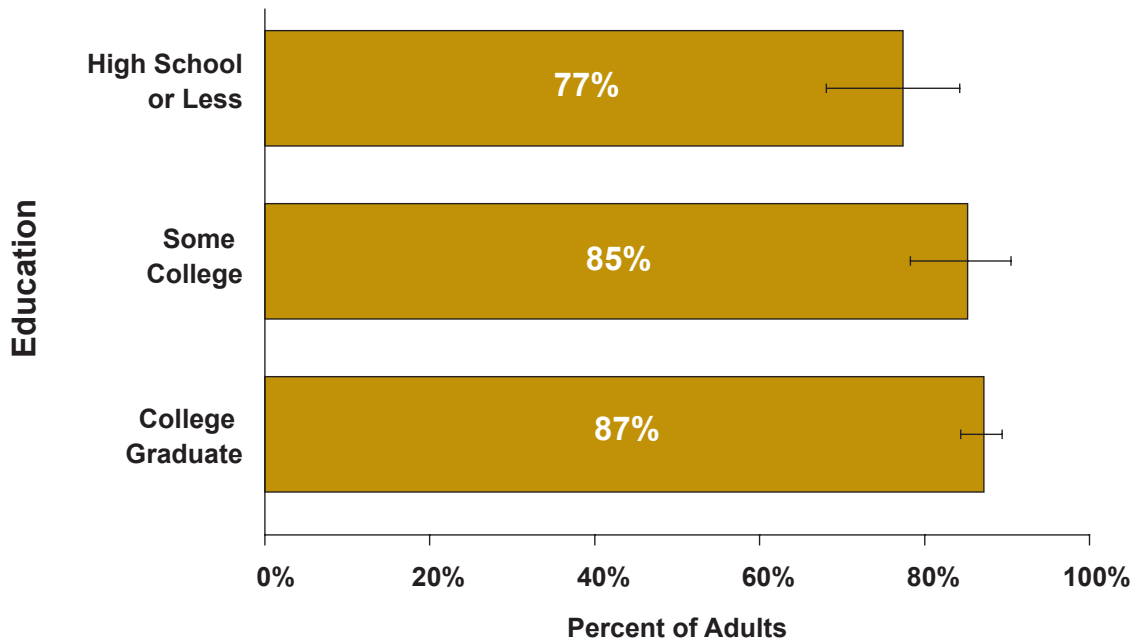
- Involvement in community organizations was measured by asking King County adults how actively they had participated in 6 specific types of community organizations and/or any additional organizations in the past 12 months. The number of organizations or groups was added for each respondent. Since these questions were asked and coded differently in 2004 and 2007 than in previous years, the data are not directly comparable with those from 2001.
- In 2007, 85% of King County adults were “very active” or “somewhat active” in at least one organization in the community.
- Levels of community involvement did not differ significantly by region.
- The most commonly cited groups or activities in which people were involved, besides those asked about specifically, were chambers of commerce, community centers and groups, heritage organizations, homeowners associations, libraries and volunteer work.

## Percent of Adults Who Are "Very or Somewhat" Active in Specific Community Organizations, King County, 2004

In the past 12 months, how active have you been in:	North Region		Seattle		East Region		South Region		King County	
	'04	'07	'04	'07	'04	'07	'04	'07	'04	'07
...a political group?	26%	15%	37%	26%	23%	21%	21%	18%	27%	21%
...a civic group such as the Kiwanis, NAACP or the Japanese American Citizen's League?	14%	11%	13%	9%	11%	10%	13%	13%	13%	11%
...a youth group or youth sports organization?	33%	39%	21%	24%	33%	41%	34%	35%	29%	33%
...an arts, culture, music or theater group?	25%	31%	36%	36%	31%	38%	24%	31%	30%	34%
...a school or educational organization	46%	49%	41%	36%	46%	52%	42%	46%	43%	44%
...a religious group or congregation?	46%	52%	39%	36%	45%	40%	48%	47%	44%	42%
...neighborhood organization or block club (any type of group that exists for people right in your neighborhood)?	24%	21%	24%	23%	28%	23%	26%	21%	25%	22%

- Between 2004 and 2007, significantly fewer North Region residents were active in a political group.
- People with a college education were more active than those with a high school education or less.
- There were no significant differences by age, race/ethnicity, gender or income.

### Percent of Adults Who Are Very or Somewhat Active in One or More Community Organizations, By Education King County, 2007



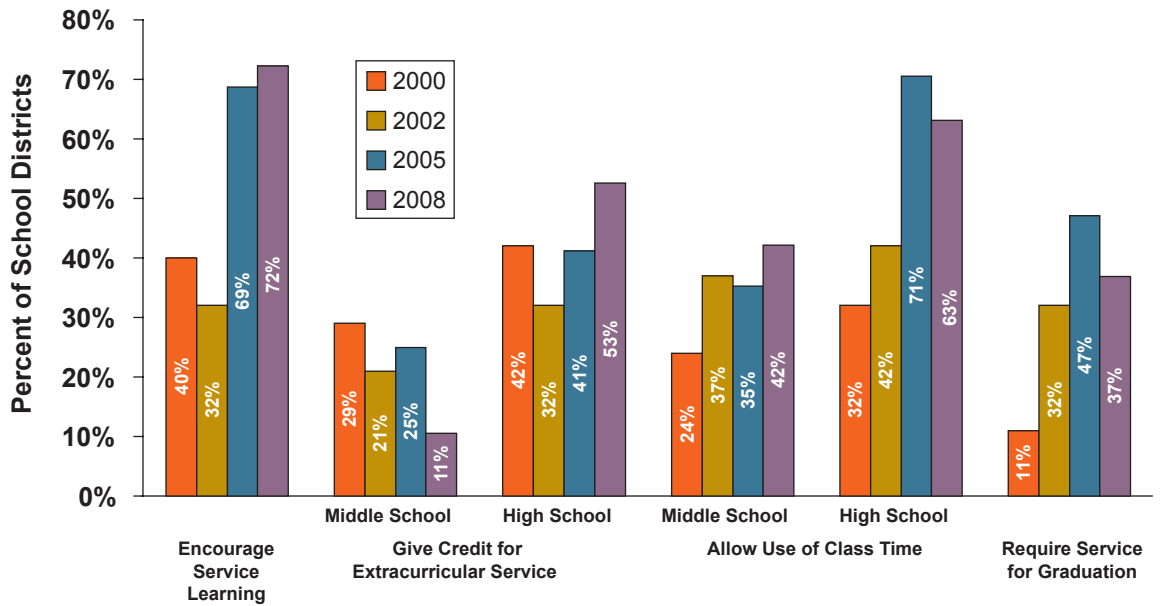
#### Data Source, Definitions, and Limitations

The involvement in community organizations measures are from the King County Community Health Survey, 2004 & 2007. In 2007, this telephone survey of adults living in King County was conducted in Spanish as well as English for the first time. The limitations of an English-and-Spanish-only telephone survey include the following: a) people who do not have a land line telephone or who do not speak English or Spanish are excluded, and b) people who have less education and lower incomes are underrepresented.

# Community Service

Most people value service to others and to the greater community, but not everyone finds time to participate in volunteer activities. The ethic of service – giving our time and talents for the sake of the common good – may be encouraged within faith communities, youth organizations, schools, and other social institutions, and reinforced through public policies that support community service. If schools are able to support service to the community, it is possible that more people, young and old, will participate.

**Percent of School Districts That Encourage Student Service to the Community  
King County 2000, 2002, 2005, 2008**



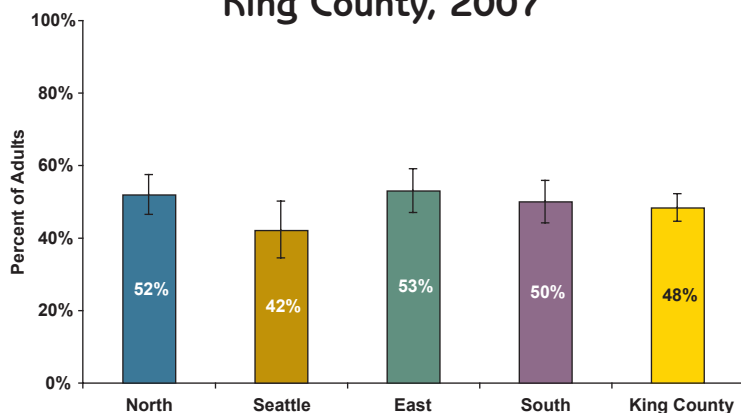
- In 2008, school districts were asked how they encourage students to participate in community service. Among the 19 King County school districts, 37% required community service for graduation. Since the last survey in 2005, one district had dropped this requirement, the only change in this policy County-wide. All except two districts had at least some policies and practices that encourage students to perform community service.
- Most districts (72%) encouraged their teachers to design service learning opportunities. High school students were more likely to be able to use class time and/or receive credit for extracurricular service.
- The practices of each school district are summarized on the following page. No distinction is made between service learning, the integration of community service with instruction and reflection on the learning experience, and more generic community service activities.



## Policies/Practices of King County School Districts Supporting Student Community Service, 2008

School District	Encourage Community Service	Give Credit for Extracurricular Service		Allow Use of Class Time for Service Activity		Require Service for Graduation
		Middle School	High School	Middle School	High School	
Auburn	√	√	√	√	√	
Bellevue	√					√
Enumclaw	√			√	√	
Federal Way			√		√	
Highline	√				√	
Issaquah						
Kent	√			√	√	√
Lake Washington	√		√		√	√
Mercer Island	√		√		√	
Northshore						
Renton	√		√		√	
Riverview	√		√	√	√	
Seattle	√	√	√	√	√	√
Shoreline						√
Skykomish	√		√		√	√
Snoqualmie Valley						
Tahoma	√			√		
Tukwila	√		√	√	√	
Vashon Island			√	√		√

### Percent of Adults Who Have Participated in Community Service or Helping Others in Past Month King County, 2007



- In a 2007 survey of King County adults, about half said they had performed community service or helped others in the past month. There were no significant differences between regions.
- Those with incomes of \$50,000 or more were more likely to have participated in community service or helping others than those with incomes between \$15,000 and \$34,999. No differences were seen by gender, race/ethnicity, age or education (data not shown).

#### Data Source, Definitions, and Limitations

School data are from email/mail surveys sent to administrators in King County's 19 school districts. Support for community service may vary by school, therefore, reports provided by district administrators reflect policy at the district level only.

The community service measure is from the King County Community Health Survey, 2007. This telephone survey of adults living in King County was conducted in English and Spanish. The limitations of an English-and-Spanish-only telephone survey include the following: a) people who do not have a land line telephone or who do not speak English or Spanish are excluded, and b) people who have less education and lower incomes are underrepresented.