

HCR

27



**HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 27**  
**IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA**  
**TWENTY-THIRD LEGISLATURE - SECOND SESSION**

**BY REPRESENTATIVE WOLF**

**Introduced: 1/20/04**  
**Referred: Resources**

**A RESOLUTION**

1 **Relating to Take a Young Person Hunting Week.**

2 **BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA:**

3 **WHEREAS** Alaska's abundance and variety of natural resources are unmatched in the  
4 United States; and

5 **WHEREAS** many of our young people today lack the opportunity to go hunting; and

6 **WHEREAS** the age of the average hunter continues to rise, and we are experiencing  
7 poor recruitment of young people into our hunting community; and

8 **WHEREAS** many of our young people lack an understanding of the importance of  
9 hunting in wildlife conservation; and

10 **WHEREAS** <sup>recognize that</sup> ~~we have an obligation~~ to teach our young people about our hunting <sup>is par</sup>  
11 <sup>many</sup> heritage; and

12 **WHEREAS** many of our young people are receiving very negative messages about  
13 the perceived evils of hunting and the dangers of using firearms; and

14 **WHEREAS** our young people need to be taught about gun safety, hunting skills, and  
15 hunting ethics; and

16 **WHEREAS** our young people need to have opportunities to hunt under the guidance

1 and supervision of an experienced adult; and

2       **WHEREAS** experienced hunters need the opportunity to pass along revered traditions  
3 and respect for the resources to future generations;

4       **BE IT RESOLVED** that the Alaska State Legislature respectfully requests the  
5 Governor to proclaim the second week of September as Take a Young Person Hunting Week;  
6 and be it

7       **FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Alaska State Legislature urges schools, community  
8 groups, and other public and private agencies and individuals to encourage the observation of  
9 Take a Young Person Hunting Week with appropriate activities that ensure the continuation  
10 of hunting.

# Alaska State Legislature

*Session:*  
State Capitol Building, Room 418  
Juneau, Alaska 99801-1182  
Phone: (907) 465-2993  
Fax: (907) 465-3835  
Toll Free: 1-800-463-2693



*Interim:*  
145 Main Street Loop Road  
Suite 221  
Kenai, AK 99611  
Phone: (907) 283-2690  
Fax: (907) 283-2763

## Representative Kelly Wolf *House District 33*

### Sponsor Statement

#### HCR 27 Relating to Take a Young Person Hunting Week

Hunting is part of our Alaskan lifestyle and heritage. It is important to pass this tradition on to our children. Hunting Education is essential for today's youth. They need to be knowledgeable of wildlife management, gun safety and hunting ethics.

Historically, Alaskans have lived off the land while learning to wisely manage our wildlife resources. The opportunity to influence our young people through one-on-one mentorship needs to be encouraged through resolutions such as "Take a Young Person Hunting Week."

This resolution recognizes the significance that mentorship has for young people. I believe we need to send a message that our constitutional rights are an important legacy that should be passed down to our youth.

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2/17/04

Representative Kelly Wolf  
State Capital  
Juneau, AK 99801-1182

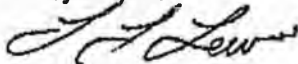
Dear Representative Wolf,

I am writing in support of your efforts to institute an annual "Take a Young Person Hunting Week" for the State of Alaska. Hunting is an important part of our Alaskan history and heritage and continues to be important to the lifestyle of many who live here. Although hunter numbers in Alaska (by license sales statistics) have slightly increased over the past three years, overall hunter numbers in the United States have declined. Currently, statistics based on license sales show that less than ten percent of our American population hunts. A large portion of our state's wildlife conservation funding comes through Pittman-Robertson Wildlife Restoration Act money. This money is collected through a Federal excise tax that hunters and shooters pay when they purchase firearms, ammunition and related equipment. As hunter numbers continue to decline, so will revenue for wildlife conservation. This does not bode well for the future of our hunting heritage or our public-trust wildlife resources.

I feel it is vitally important that we actively educate, recruit and mentor our kids in our hunting heritage. I am a volunteer hunter education and 4-H shooting sports instructor that believes it is better to hunt with your kids than to hunt for them. In 1998, the youth of Alaska voted in their mock election, "The Kid's Vote", to pass Ballot Initiative Nine. Ballot Initiative Nine would have disallowed the use of snares for the taking of wolves. It was because of that mock vote that I became aware of the turning tide of opinion among the majority of our youth regarding harvest as a wildlife management tool. To me, hunting and trapping are synonymous as they both involve harvest and consumptive use. Our Alaskan children need to be taught the importance of hunting and consumptive use as part of our heritage, traditions and lifestyle. We owe it to them to teach them the important role hunting plays in wildlife management. Only then can they make informed choices. Many other states encourage the mentoring and education of their youth through an annual event such as "Take a Young Person Hunting Week." I feel our children deserve the same.

As you probably already know, beginning in the year 2002, those born after January 1<sup>st</sup>, 1986 must possess Hunter Education certification to legally hunt in units 7, 13, 14, 15 and 20. I feel that a "Take a Young Person Hunting Week" would be a valuable tool that we as volunteer hunter education instructors could use to promote the Hunter Education program statewide. It would also show that our state recognizes the importance of hunting as part of our heritage and lifestyle regardless of race or zip-code. I appreciate your efforts to this end. Thank you.

Larry L. Lewis



PO Box 403  
Kasilof AK 99610  
282-1370 Home  
262-9368 Work

# FACTORS RELATED TO HUNTING AND FISHING PARTICIPATION AMONG THE NATION'S YOUTH

PHASE V: FINAL REPORT



Peter Ring ©

CONDUCTED BY RESPONSIVE MANAGEMENT  
HARRISONBURG, VIRGINIA  
2003

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AND WILDLIFE SERVICE, DIVISION OF FEDERAL AID,  
FEDERAL AID IN SPORT FISH AND WILDLIFE RESTORATION  
GRANT AGREEMENT 91400-01-0010

# FACTORS RELATED TO HUNTING AND FISHING PARTICIPATION AMONG THE NATION'S YOUTH

## PHASE V: FINAL REPORT



Produced under Federal Aid in Sport Fish and Wildlife Restoration  
Grant Agreement 91400-01-0010 (VA M-2-R FAIMS)

### Responsive Management



Mark Damian Duda, Executive Director  
Peter E. De Michele, Ph.D., Director of Research  
Carol Zurawski, Research Associate  
Martin Jones, Research Associate  
Joy E. Yoder, Research Associate  
William Testerman, Survey Center Manager  
Alison Lanier, Business Manager  
Steven J. Bissell, Ph.D., Qualitative Research Associate  
Ping Wang, Ph.D., Quantitative Research Associate  
James B. Herrick, Ph.D., Research Associate  
Jennifer Marshall, Assistant Survey Center Manager

130 Franklin Street  
Harrisonburg, Virginia 22801  
Telephone: 540/432-1888 Facsimile: 540/432-1892  
E-Mail: [mark@responsivemanagement.com](mailto:mark@responsivemanagement.com)  
[www.responsivemanagement.com](http://www.responsivemanagement.com)

LaHart (1978), Baird and Tolman (1982), and Kress (1975) found that the strongest influence on children's knowledge of and attitudes toward wildlife was knowledge gained through direct contact with various animals, whereas indirect instruction was not as effective. LaHart (1978) found that participation in animal-related activities had the strongest association with knowledge levels in youth of any of the variables he had studied. A Responsive Management study (1999a) suggested that programs aimed at school children are more effective in imparting knowledge if the program includes "hands-on" activities.

One study suggested that a negative correlation between interest in wildlife and fear of animals shows the value of dispelling fears about wildlife before attempting to foster among children an interest in learning more about wildlife and wildlife-related activities (Westervelt and Llewellyn, 1985).

### Attitudes Toward Hunting

- A majority of youth approve of legal hunting (Figures 15 and 16).

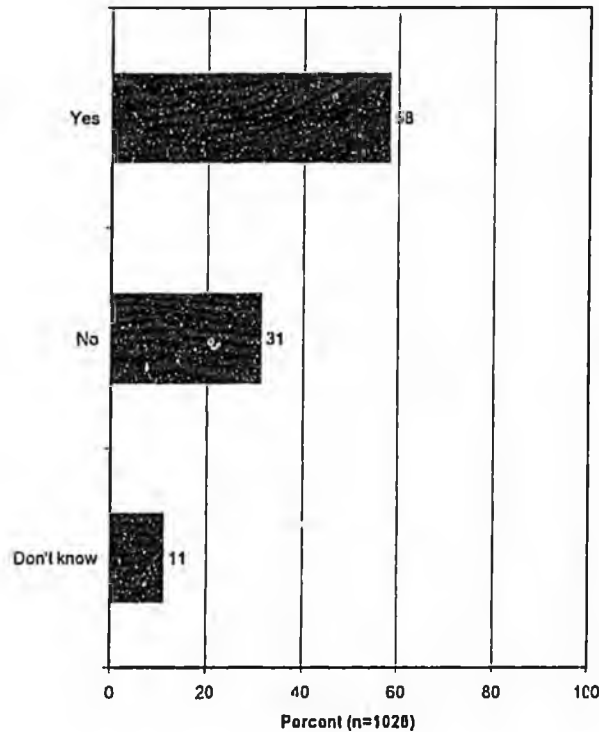
A majority of youth (58%) approve of legal hunting, while 33% disapprove (Figure 14) (Phase III). Additionally, a majority of youth (58%) think that people who hunt respect living things (Figure 15) (Phase III).

- Slightly less than half of youth expressed some interest in going hunting, and one in five were very interested in going hunting (Figure 17).

Forty-four percent of youth expressed some interest (19% very interested; 25% a little interested) in going hunting (Phase III). Youth who were very interested in going hunting were significantly more likely to have a family member who hunts ( $z = 5.87$ ) (Phase IV). Additionally, youth who were very interested in going hunting were significantly more likely to have been fishing in the previous year ( $z = 4.02$ ) (Phase IV). Those interested in going hunting were significantly more likely to live in a rural area ( $z = 2.65$  for rural areas, and  $z = 5.89$  for rural non-

Figure 16.

Q59. In general do you think that people who hunt respect living things?

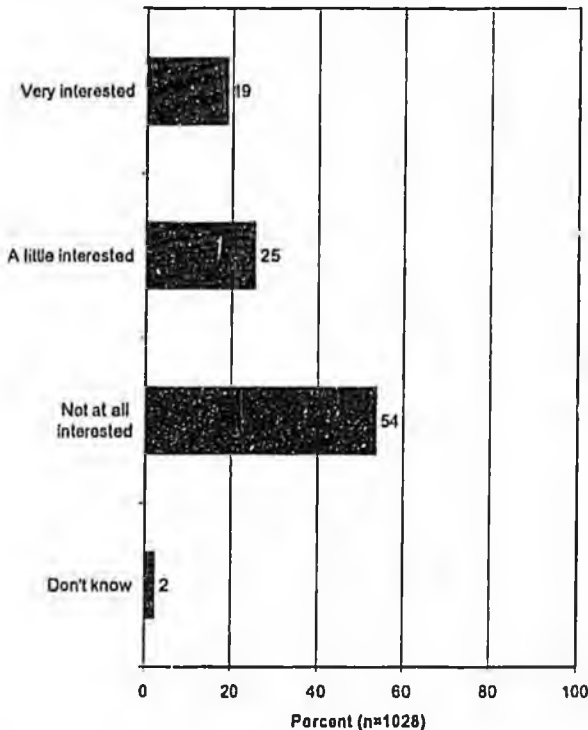


- Most youth hunters would like to hunt more than they currently do.

Among youth hunters (those who had hunted in the past year), a plurality (41%) said that they would like to hunt a lot more than they currently do. Twenty-eight percent of youth hunters said that they would like to hunt a little more than they currently do; 27% of youth hunters said they would like to hunt about the same amount. Only 4% of youth hunters said they would like to hunt less (Phase III).

Figure 17.

Q26. How Interested are you in going hunting?



- **A majority of youth hunters like hunting “a lot.”**

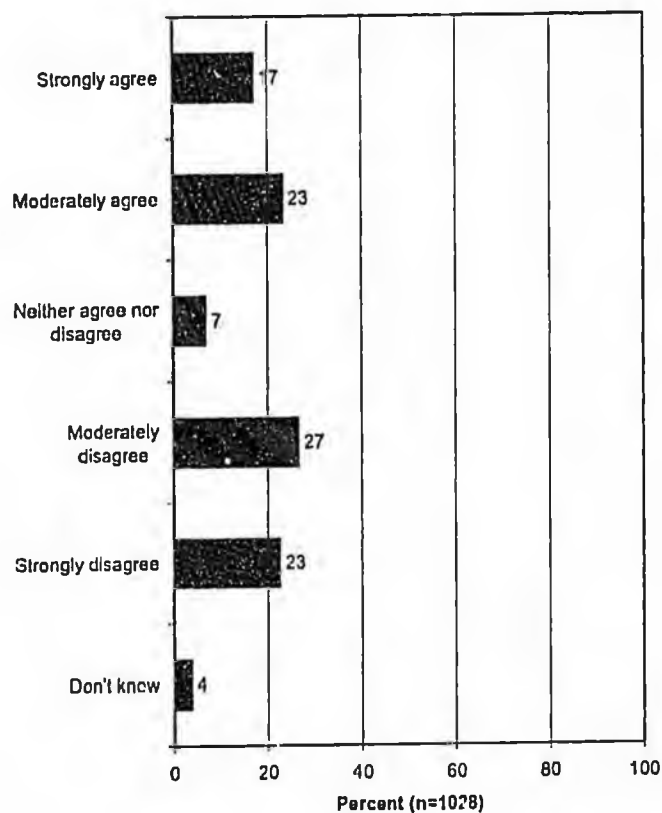
Among those who had hunted, a majority (56%) like hunting “a lot,” and 39% like hunting “a little,” while 5% indicated that they do not like hunting at all (Phase III).

- **Overwhelming majorities of youth think it is okay for girls and boys to hunt (Figure 18).**

Overwhelming majorities of youth think it is okay for girls to hunt (88%) and for boys to hunt (91%) (Phase III).

Figure 19.

Q58. Do you agree or disagree that hunting is a  
safe recreational activity?



- A majority of youth think their peers think that hunting is a “little cool” or “very cool.”

A majority of youth (55%) said that kids their age think hunting is a “little cool”; otherwise, nearly equal percentages said kids their age think hunting is “very cool” (16%) or “not cool at all” (18%) (Phase II).

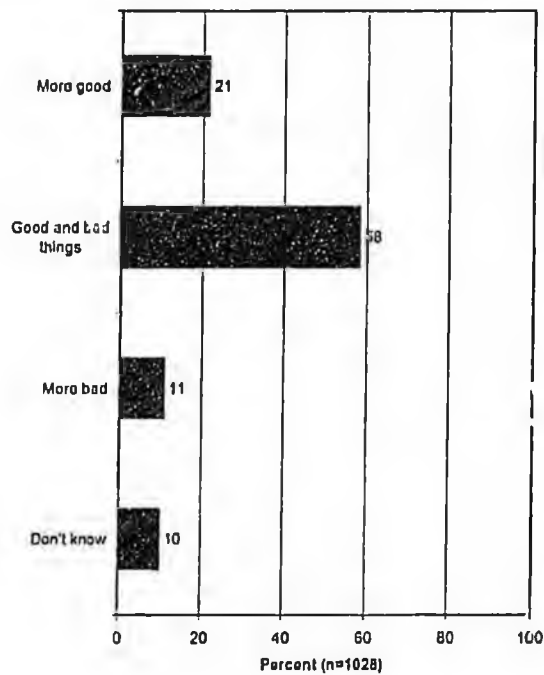
- Youth hear more good things than bad things about hunting (Figure 20).

The majority of youth (58%) said that they hear both good and bad things about hunting. Otherwise, roughly twice as many hear more good things (21%) than hear more bad things (11%) about hunting (Phase III).

- Very few youth are seeing or hearing information at school that helps them learn more about hunting or that increases their interest in going hunting. Slightly more, but still not a majority, are seeing or hearing information outside of school that helps them learn more about hunting or that increases their interest in going hunting.

Figure 20.

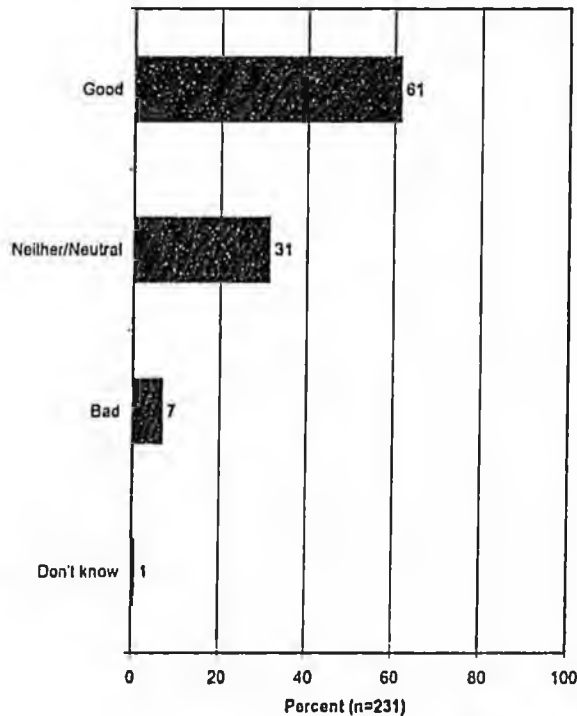
Q65. In general, do you hear more good things or bad things about hunting, or do you hear both good and bad things about hunting?



- A low percentage of youth (15%) had seen or heard information from teachers or adults at school that helped them learn more about hunting or that increased their interest in going hunting. A slightly higher percentage (34%) had seen or heard information outside of school that helped them learn more about hunting or that increased their interest in going hunting (Phase III).
- When youth do hear things about hunting at school, they are hearing good things, and their perceptions are that their teachers support hunting (Figures 21 and 22).

Figure 21

Q63. Did they say good things or bad things about hunting? (Asked of those who have had a teacher or guest speaker talk about hunting at school.)



## Participation in Hunting

- Just under a quarter of youth in 2003 had gone hunting at some time in the past, while 15% of American youth had hunted in the previous year. Youth participation in hunting is positively related to being male, to having a family member who hunts, to having also been fishing, and to living in a rural area or spending time in rural areas.

Just under a quarter of youth (24%) had gone hunting at some time in the past, and 15% of youth had hunted in the previous year (Phase III).

Youth who had hunted *at some point in their life* were significantly more likely to have a family member who hunts ( $z = 8.42$ ) (Phase IV). Also, participation in hunting is related to participation in fishing: youth who had been hunting were significantly more likely than youth who had not been hunting to have gone freshwater fishing ( $z = 2.56$ ) or saltwater fishing ( $z = 5.46$ ) and were more likely to have been fishing in the previous year ( $z = 4.63$ ) (Phase IV). Youth who had been hunting at some time in their life were significantly more likely than were youth who had not been hunting to have lived on a farm ( $z = 6.31$ ), to have lived in a rural area but not on a farm ( $z = 3.98$ ), to have grown up on a farm ( $z = 6.97$ ), to have grown up in a rural area but not on a farm ( $z = 2.45$ ), and to have spent time away from the city ( $z = 2.52$ ) (Phase IV). Finally, youth who had hunted at some time were significantly less likely than were youth who have never hunted to be African-American ( $z = -2.32$ ) (Phase IV).

Youth who had gone hunting *in the previous year* were significantly more likely than were youth who had not hunted in the previous year to have gone freshwater fishing at some time in their life ( $z = 2.42$ ) or saltwater fishing at some time in their life ( $z = 3.92$ ) and were more likely to have fished in the previous year ( $z = 4.71$ ) (Phase IV). There is also a relationship between rural areas and hunting: youth who had hunted in the previous year were significantly more likely than were youth who had not hunted in the previous year to live on a farm ( $z = 4.57$ ), to have been raised on a farm ( $z = 4.03$ ), to live in a rural area but not on a

farm ( $z = 2.96$ ), to have been raised in a rural area but not on a farm ( $z = 2.85$ ), and to indicate that they spend time away from the city ( $z = 2.36$ ) (Phase IV). Youth who had hunted in the previous year were more likely than were youth who had not hunted in the previous year to be male ( $z = 4.65$ ) (Phase IV). Also, youth who had hunted in the previous year were positively correlated with youth who said that their family was "very close" ( $z = 2.15$ ) (Phase IV).

Another correlation was found between participation in hunting and reasons for *fishing*: youth who had hunted at some time in the past were more likely to say they *fish* to eat fish ( $z = 3.05$ ) or they *fish* for the challenge ( $z = 4.94$ ) (Phase IV).

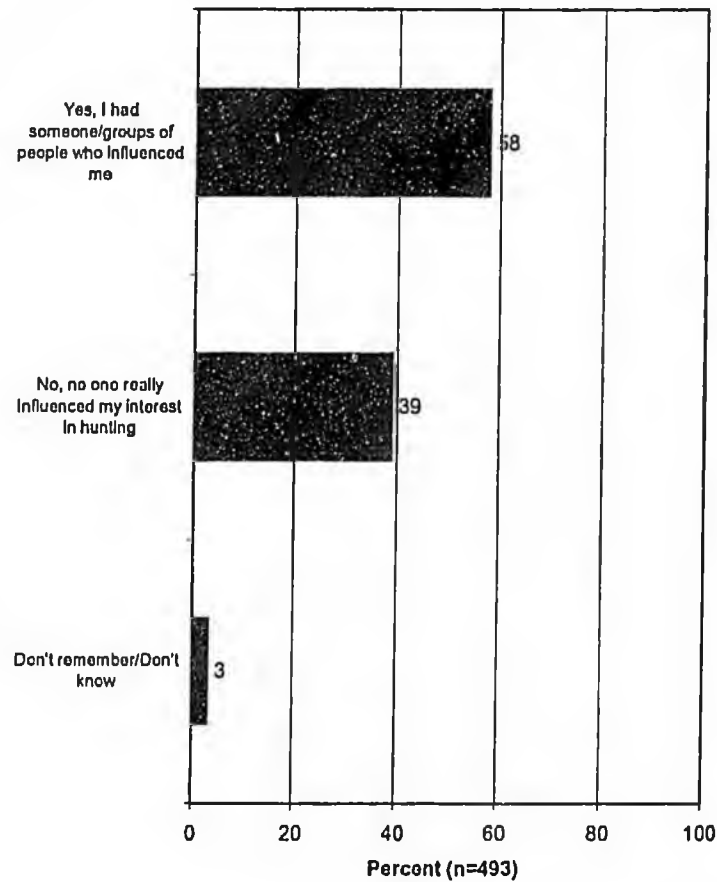
- The mean number of times that youth hunters went hunting in the past year was 8.8 times (Phase III).
- The mean age at which youth hunters had started hunting was 10 years (Phase III).
- Youth hunters typically had a mentor who had a positive influence on their interest and/or participation in hunting, and most often that mentor was their father or, to a lesser extent, another male family member (Figures 31, 32, and 33).

Of those who had gone hunting at some time in the past, a majority (58%) indicated that a person or a group of people had had a positive influence on their interest or participation in hunting (Figure 31) (Phase III). Additionally, youth who had hunted in the previous year were positively correlated with youth who indicated that someone or some group had influenced them in their interest and participation in hunting ( $z = 2.29$ ) (Phase IV).

A little more than half of youth (52%) had a family member who hunts, typically a male—a father, uncle, or grandfather. These three family members also are the most likely to have taught a youth to hunt: 72% of youth who had been hunting said their

Figure 31.

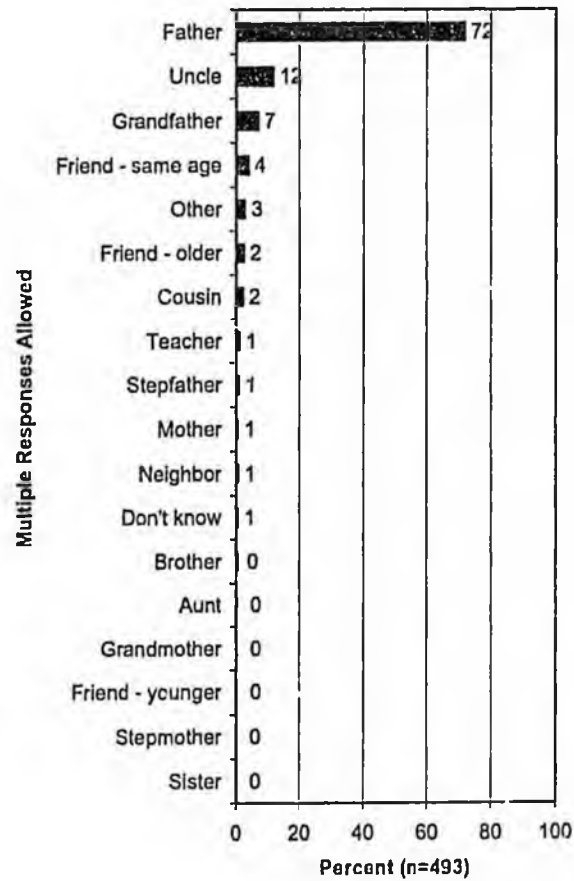
Q122. Did anybody or any groups of people have a positive influence on your interest or participation level in hunting today? (Asked of those who have gone hunting.)



father taught them, 12% said an uncle, and 7% said a grandfather (Figure 32). Youth who had been hunting most commonly hunt with their father (65%), uncle (12%), or friend of the same age (9%) (Figure 33) (Phase III).

Figure 32.

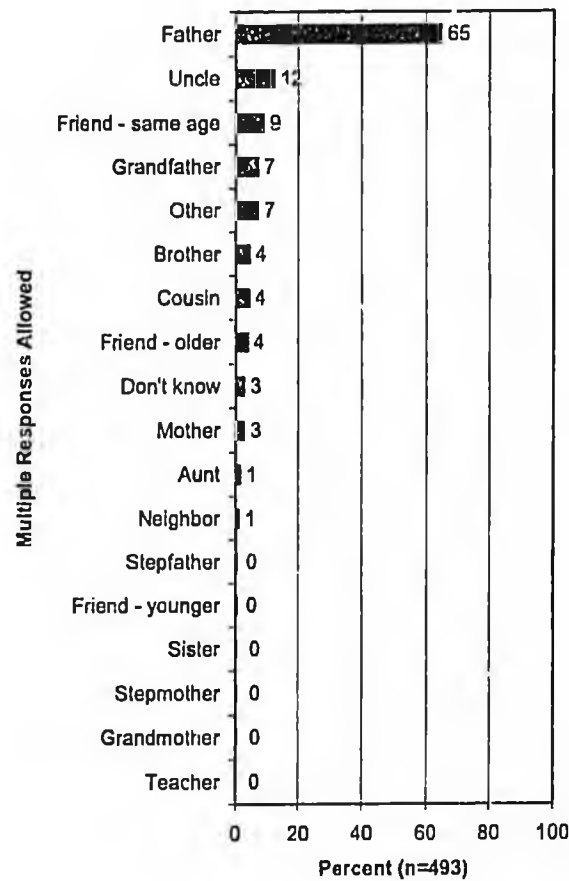
Q115. Who first taught you how to hunt? (Asked of those who have gone hunting.)



Youth who were very interested in going hunting were significantly more likely to have a family member who hunts ( $z = 5.87$ ) (Phase IV). Put another way, hunters come from hunting families.

Figure 33.

Q118. Whom do you usually hunt with now? (Asked of those who have gone hunting.)

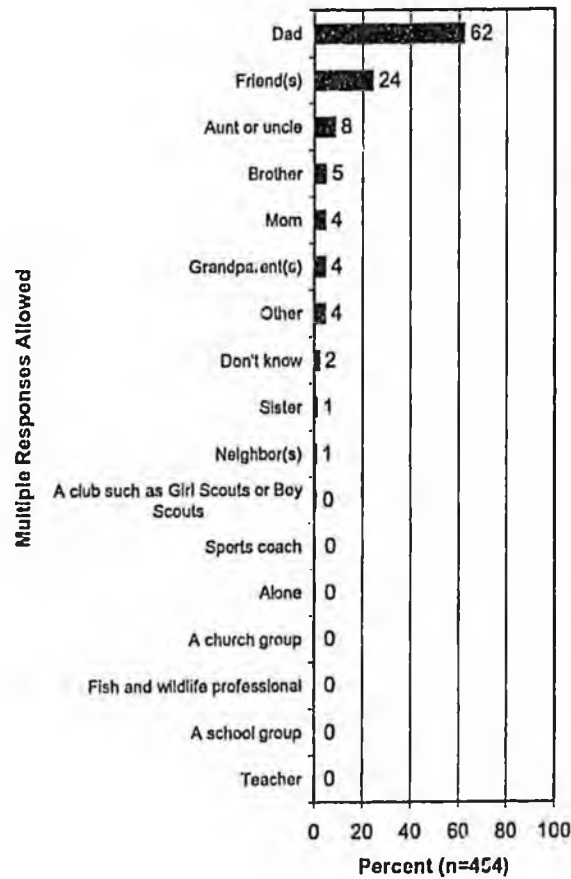


- A majority of youth who expressed an interest in hunting want to hunt with their father (Figure 34).

Youth who expressed interest in hunting most commonly wanted to hunt with their father (62%), distantly followed by a friend (24%) (Phase II).

Figure 34.

Q28. Of all the people you could hunt with, whom would you most like to go hunting with? (Asked of those who were interested in going hunting.)



- The top reasons that would encourage youth to go hunting or to hunt more were being asked by another person, such as his/her father, another family member, or a friend (Figure 35).

The top three reasons that would encourage youth to go hunting or to hunt more pertained to being asked by somebody else: a father (56%), another family member (50%), or a friend (49%). The next items pertained to having knowledge or skills: youth would want to hunt more if they could learn more at a hunter education class (42%) and if they had better hunting/shooting skills (38%) (Phase III).

Figure 35.

Q67 & 68. I'm going to read a list of things that  
might make you want to go hunting or hunt more.  
Would it make you want to go hunting or  
hunt more if...?

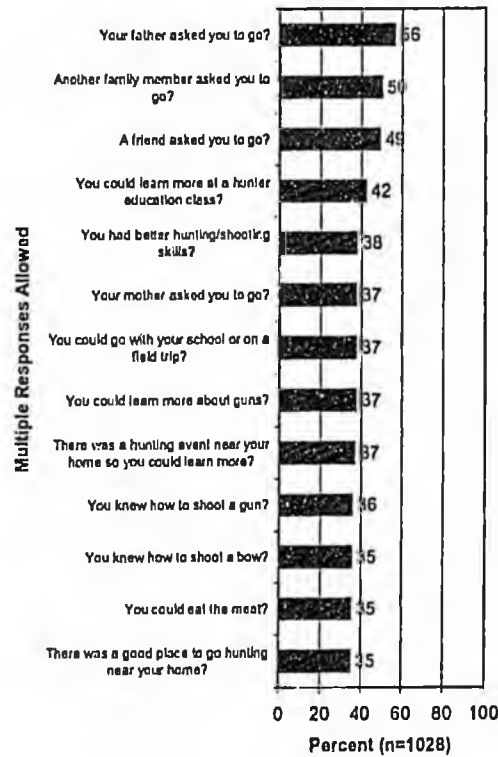
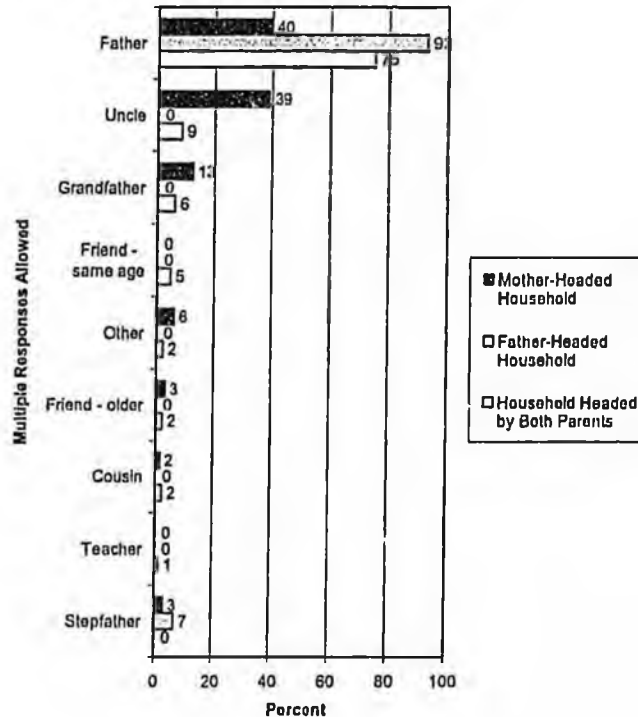


Figure 36.

Q115. Who first taught you how to hunt? (Asked of those who have gone hunting.) By type of household.

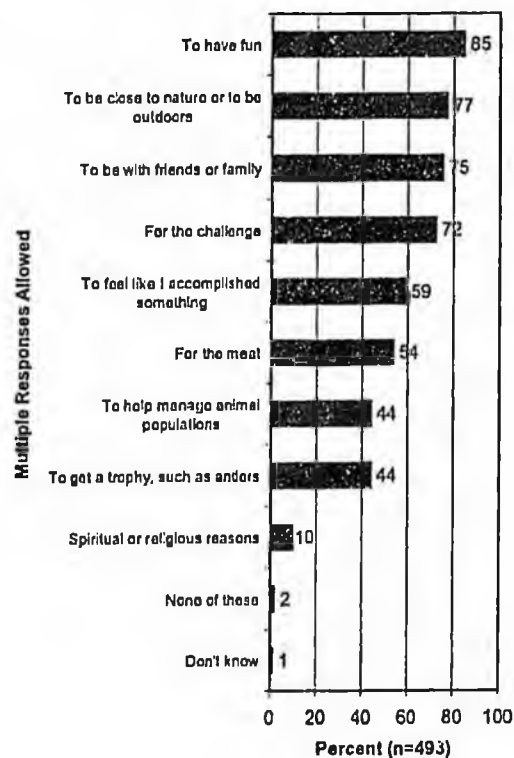


- Youth hunt most commonly to have fun, to be close to nature/outdoors, to be with friends or family, and for the challenge (Figure 37).

The top reasons that youth (those who had gone hunting sometime in the past) gave for hunting were to have fun (85%), to be close to nature/outdoors (77%), to be with friends or family (75%), and for the challenge (72%) (Phase III). When asked about the single most important reason why they go hunting (asked of youth who had hunted), youth most commonly said to have fun (34%) and to be with friends or family (30%) (Phase III).

Figure 37.

**Q127. Thinking about the reasons that you go hunting, please tell me if each of the following reasons is a reason that you, personally, go hunting. (Asked of those who have gone hunting.)**

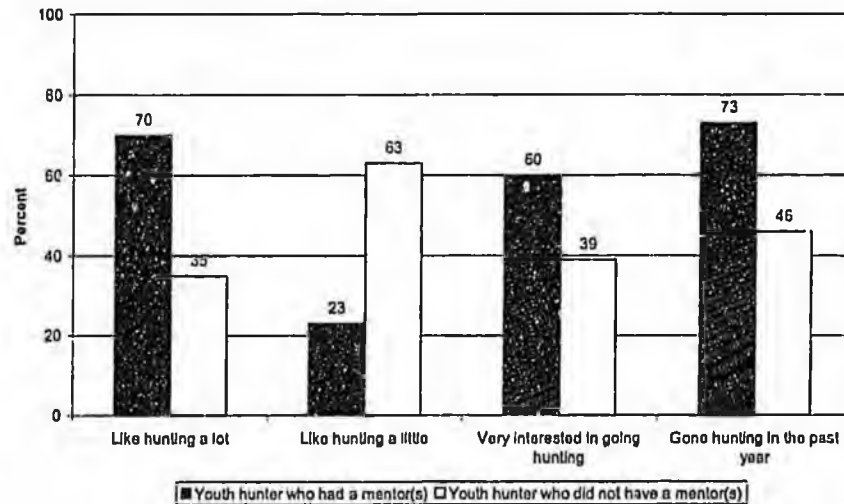


- Slightly more than half of youth had a friend who hunts, and having a friend who hunts appears to increase the likelihood that the youth will want to hunt.

Slightly more than half of youth (56%) had a friend who hunts (Phase III). Having a friend who hunts appears to increase the likelihood that the youth will show interest in hunting: 42% of youth said that they would be more likely to go hunting if a friend hunted too (Phase III).

Figure 51.

Youth hunters and the impact of mentors on their hunting participation.



Mentoring is a challenging task. It requires a knowledgeable mentor who is willing to take a great deal of time, commitment, and personal sacrifice to bring/accompany a youth in the sport. It would appear that there are many youth who are interested in hunting who do not participate. Some of those youth come from families that have members who participate in hunting.

Research conducted by Responsive Management has indicated that sportsmen/sportswomen think that bringing new participants into their sport is important, but that the process takes away from their own enjoyment. Supervising a new participant often means less personal time to participate and relax. This same research seems to indicate that the personal cost of introducing a new person to the sport is reasonably high, but, despite that, most sportsmen/sportswomen are willing to entertain the idea of mentoring a new participant (Responsive Management, 2002b).

Somehow those potential mentors need to be reached and encouraged to bring along children from immediate and/or extended families to teach them and encourage them in the sport.

### Hunting Retention and Desertion

- Because it is easier to foster hunting participation among those who have been exposed to a hunting culture and have already had some experience with hunting, successful retention programs may have a more substantial positive effect on the absolute numbers of hunters than recruitment programs.
- Traditional management programs, such as "harvest," "wildlife management," and "trophy hunting," are not as important to youths' satisfaction with hunting as are social and other factors, such as being with friends and family or having fun. Therefore, it would appear that youth hunting programs that focus on these more traditional management objectives exclusively will not be as successful as programs that emphasize fun and family aspects first and more traditional management goals as ancillary objectives.

Hunting retention is positively correlated with hunting satisfaction, and satisfaction with hunting among youth is not primarily addressed by traditional management programs, such as "harvest," "wildlife management," and "trophy hunting." These traditional management programs are not highly integral to youths' interest in hunting and, more importantly, are not primarily responsible for youths' hunting satisfaction. Instead, the social aspects of hunting—being with friends and family and having fun—are more important to youth. It would appear that youth hunting programs that focus on these more traditional management objectives *exclusively* will not be as successful as programs that emphasize social aspects of hunting. It is important that efforts to make hunting fun should not be lost among other strategies to increase hunting participation.

- Overall, youth hunting will remain preponderantly an activity of youth with their adult male family members. Youth hunting initiation and retention programs must recognize and incorporate this fact into their program design if they are to achieve significant long-term sustainable retention goals.

• One element of retaining youth hunters is for them to learn skills, as many youth indicated that their lack of skill was a detraction from their hunting satisfaction.