

# CIRCLE Growing Voters: Parents and Families

Parents and family members are central to young people's civic development, especially before they reach age 18. They can create access and exposure to opportunities for civic learning and engagement connected to elections, offer vital support to take advantage of these opportunities, and create a culture of voting and civic engagement that imbues those opportunities with meaning and value.

## THE FACTS

**36%**

of teens—the largest group in our CIRCLE Growing Voters survey—rely on only their families, friends, and personal networks for civic learning they're not getting in schools.

**70%**

of teens personally spoke to their parents about the election in 2020, though just 54% reported learning from parents about voter registration.

**62%**

of teens saw or heard information about the 2020 election from their family, more than any other source.

The CIRCLE Growing Voters is a paradigm shift to transform how policymakers and many other stakeholders can strengthen young people's equitable engagement in democracy. Learn more, engage in this work, and share it with others at:

[circle.tufts.edu/circlegrowingvoters](https://circle.tufts.edu/circlegrowingvoters)

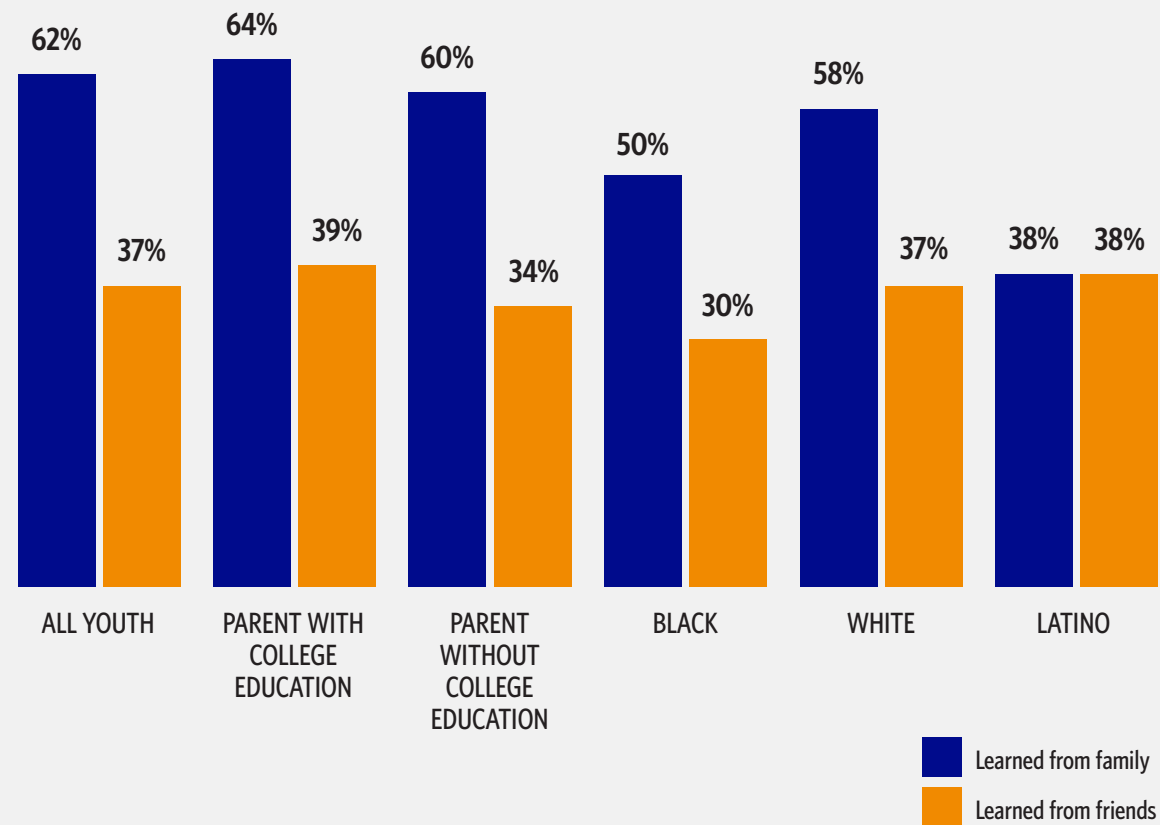


## Parents Talk, Kids Listen:

Most teens hear from their parents and families about elections even more than from their influential peer groups. There's a need and an opportunity to expand these conversations, especially among families of youth of color.

### FRIENDS AND FAMILY INFLUENCE YOUNG PEOPLE'S CIVIC LEARNING

A number of factors are correlated with whether young people learn about elections from friends and family



### RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION: HOW PARENTS AND FAMILIES CAN GROW VOTERS

#### WHAT

Demonstrate voter engagement every chance you get.

Help your teens pre-register/register to vote.

Support teens in your family serving as poll workers.

Encourage political discussion and engagement.

Support civic education in schools.

Embrace the role of social media and help youth navigate it.

#### WHY

This will instill in your young family members the idea that voting is valued and important.

Adults with more experience voting can support young people in understanding how to get registered and walk them through the process.

Teens report that serving as poll workers provides them positive learning experiences that they often aren't getting at school.

Political conversations in the family can help young people understand how their voices and votes can make a difference in their communities.

Civic learning opportunities in school are critical to helping youth grow into voters, and parents can be influential stakeholders and powerful advocates for these opportunities.

Social networks can be a valuable source of information about issues and elections, a way for youth to use their voice by creating and sharing media, and pathways to additional civic engagement opportunities.

#### HOW

Take children to the polls, show your support for voting with signs and stickers, etc.

Use this resource to find out if the teens in your family can pre-register to vote before turning 18 and, if so, encourage and help them do so. For example, if they don't drive, help them get another form of state ID.

Many states allow youth under 18 to serve as poll workers. Your city or town's election department staff will have information on how to apply.

Ask children and teens in your family about issues they care about and encourage them to develop their own stances and opinions. Help them connect these issues with the decisions made by local, state, and national leaders.

Ask whether and how civic learning activities in your child's school are building core skills for democratic participation. Work with administrators and educators to expand the reach of these pedagogical practices.

Acknowledge the valuable role social media can play in young people's development as voters and help them navigate its complex information landscape so they can use it effectively as a resource.

# CIRCLE

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