



Spotlighting the CEV Series: Engaging with Neighbors

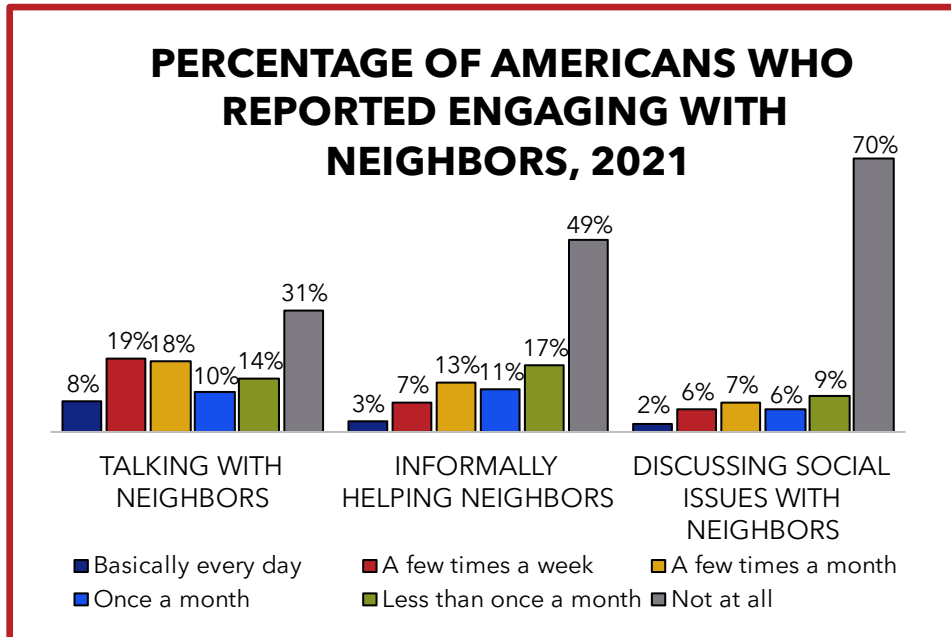
Engaging with neighbors is an essential aspect of civic engagement.

Volunteering with organizations or voting in elections are often the first things that come to mind when we think about civic engagement. Interacting with neighbors is another form of civic engagement that makes a difference in one's community. Engaging with neighbors can include taking collective action together, exchanging favors informally, discussing social issues—or simply saying hello. All of these behaviors are crucial for bolstering social cohesion and social capital within communities.

As part of the "Spotlighting the CEV" series, this key findings brief explores national trends in engaging with neighbors from 2019 to 2021.

In many ways, Americans engaged with their neighbors similarly before and during the COVID-19 pandemic.

In September 2021—eighteen months into a global pandemic—about 70 percent of Americans reported that they have conversations or spend time with their neighbors and 30 percent said they discuss social issues with their neighbors. Additionally, about 50 percent of Americans reported that they [informally help their neighbors](#) by exchanging favors such as house sitting or lending tools. The share of Americans engaging in each of these civic behaviors in the past year was [virtually identical in 2019](#).



Source for figure: Analysis conducted by the Office of Research and Evaluation, AmeriCorps, Civic Engagement and Volunteering (2019-2021) Supplement data, U.S. Census Bureau.

About the Series

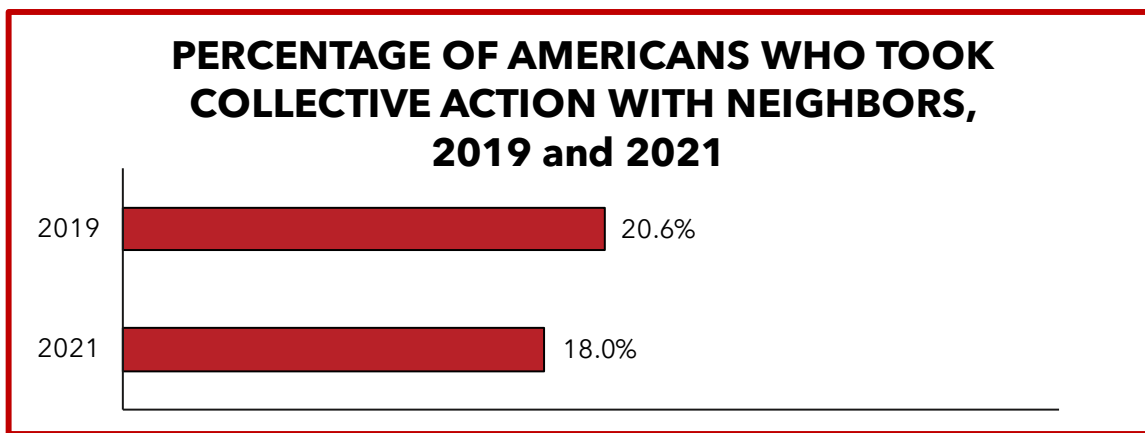
Spotlighting the CEV Series explores important findings from the Civic Engagement and Volunteering (CEV) Supplement of the Current Population Survey. Conducted by the U.S. Census Bureau in partnership with AmeriCorps, the CEV is a nationally representative, valuable resource for understanding various types of civic engagement over time. It has been administered biennially since 2017 with related datasets going as far back as 2002. CEV data can support actionable insights and data-driven decision making.

This series will explore six key constructs from the 2021 CEV: Organizational Engagement, Informal Helping and Conversation, Local Collective Action, Engaging with Issues, Economic Engagement, and Political Engagement.



The share of Americans who engaged with their neighbors by taking collective action together decreased from 2019 to 2021.

The CEV asks survey respondents if they have gotten together with other people from their neighborhood to do something positive for their neighborhood or the community in the past year. The rate of Americans who reported taking collective action with neighbors declined by approximately 12.5 percent (a decrease of 2.6 percentage points) between 2019 and 2021. Since [taking collective action is strongly associated with more informal ways of engaging with neighbors](#), encouraging interactions as simple as saying hello can help rebuild neighborhood capacity to take collective action moving forward.



Explore the Data

The CEV data is available for public use. Visit the AmeriCorps Open Data portal at <https://data.americorps.gov>. For more information about the CEV data and findings, please reach out to the AmeriCorps Office of Research and Evaluation at AmeriCorpsCEV@americorps.gov.

What's Next?

The AmeriCorps Office of Research and Evaluation and its partners are exploring the CEV data's implications for AmeriCorps programming and civic engagement in America more broadly. Ongoing research is exploring how various civic behaviors cluster together and how the impact of COVID-19 on civic engagement rates varies by geography.

About the Office of Research and Evaluation

The [AmeriCorps Office of Research and Evaluation](#) assists AmeriCorps and its partners in collecting, analyzing, and disseminating data and insights about AmeriCorps programs and civic life in America.

About AmeriCorps

AmeriCorps, the federal agency for national service and volunteerism, provides opportunities for Americans to serve their country domestically, address the nation's most pressing challenges, improve lives and communities, and strengthen civic engagement. Each year, the agency places more than 200,000 AmeriCorps members and AmeriCorps Seniors volunteers in intensive service roles; and empowers millions more to serve as long-term, short-term, or one-time volunteers. **Learn more at [AmeriCorps.gov](https://americorps.gov).**