

Youth Voice: Do Adults in Arlington Listen to Youth?

This Data Point is based on the **Your Voice Matters Survey**. Arlington Public Schools (APS) and the Arlington Partnership for Children, Youth and Families (APCYF) collaborate to provide the Arlington community with a snapshot of school climate, staff engagement, and student and family well-being. In Spring 2018, data was collected in all 5th grade homerooms and a representative sample of students in grades 6th-11th grade. Many 12th graders and ungraded students also completed the survey and their results are included. The survey was also given to all families and staff. Survey results inform Arlington to strengthen programs for students and families. The survey focus areas include: bullying, communication, safety, and quality of instruction. This Data Point presents results to relevant to the general public and the Arlington Teen Network Board.

Youth voice is a process to develop young people to have a shared role in decision making. This involves providing not only the opportunity for youth input but also the space – providing a comfortable setting and enough time for young people to form their thoughts, to share their knowledge, observations, and reactions to the world around them. Thus, to fully develop youth voice, it is critical for adults in the community to listen to what youth have to say.

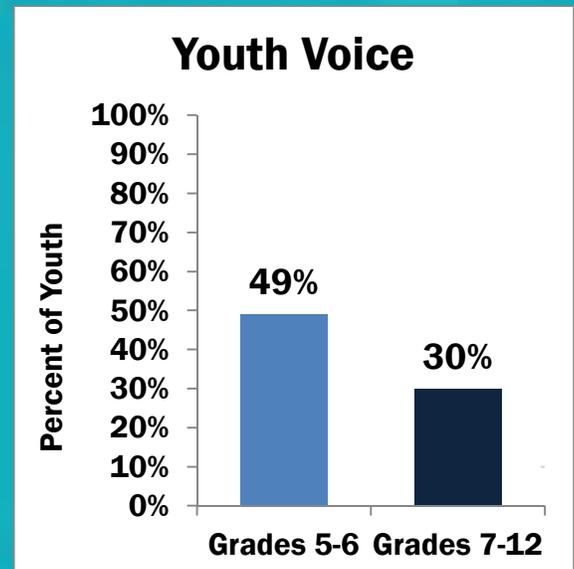
Are adults in Arlington listening to youth?

In Spring 2018, youth in Arlington were asked if adults in the community listen to what they have to say. Adults in the community include individuals that the youth see in the neighborhood outside of school who are not family or teachers.

Voice (Feeling Valued, Supported & Heard)

How often do adults in your community listen to what you have to say?

Adults in your community could include adults you see in your neighborhood on weekends or after school that are not your family or teachers.



- A greater percentage of young people in grades 5 and 6 (49 percent) report adults in Arlington listen to them than do youth in grades 7 to 12 (30 percent) (See Figure).
- Nearly half (49 percent) of 5th and 6th graders report adults in Arlington listen to them (See Figure).
- Less than a third (30 percent) of Arlington youth in 7th through 12th grades think adults in the community are listening to what they have to say (See Figure).



Data Point

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How often do adults in Arlington listen to youth?

In Spring 2018, youth in Arlington were asked how often adults in the community listen to what they have to say.

- Over a third (34 percent) of Arlington youth in 7th through 12th grades think adults in the community almost never or do not often listen to what they have to say, whereas less than a quarter (22 percent) of young people in

5th to 6th grades think adults are not listening to them (See Figure).

- Over a third (36 percent) of 7th to 12th graders and less than a third (29 percent) of 5th to 6th graders think that adults in Arlington will listen to them sometimes (See Figure).
- A quarter (25 percent) of Arlington youth in grades 7th through 12th grades report that adults in the community

frequently to what they have to say, while only five percent report that adults almost always listen to them (See Figure).

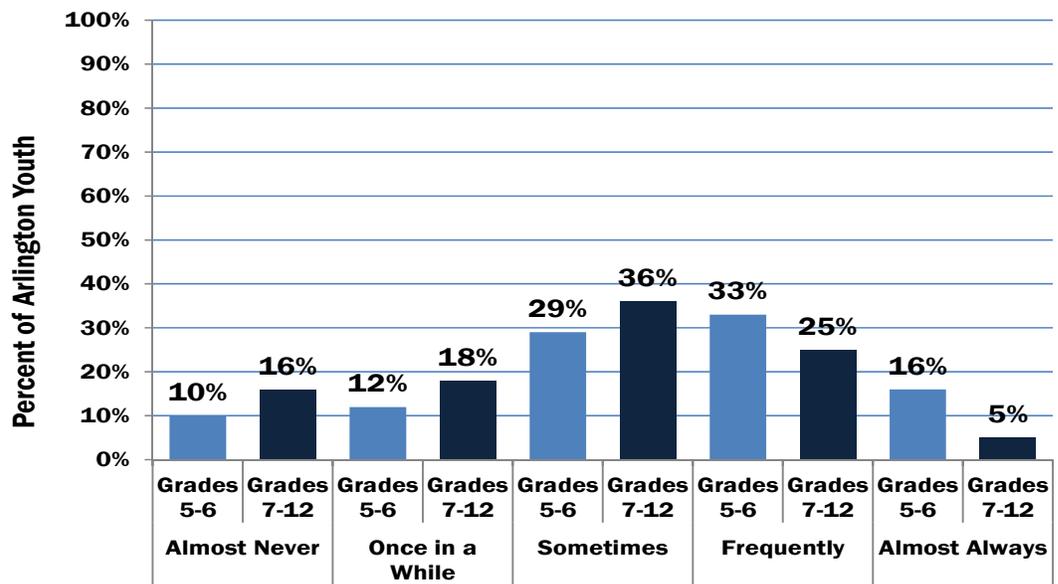
- A third (33 percent) of young people in 5th and 6th grade report that adults in Arlington frequently listen to them and 16% almost always listen to what they have to say (See Figure).

Voice (Feeling Valued, Supported & Heard)

How often do adults in your community listen to what you have to say?

Adults in your community could include adults you see in your neighborhood on weekends or after school that are not your family or teachers.

Youth Voice by Frequency Adults Listen



Arlington Teen Network Board (TNB) is a County and School Board-appointed teen advocacy group comprised of high school students, from different backgrounds and parts of Arlington to provide a county-wide voice for Arlington teens. TNB members talk, make recommendations, and act to improve the lives of Arlington youth. TNB has four active committees: Communications, ICE (Internships, community service and employment), DAP (Drugs and Alcohol Prevention), and Peer to Peer Relationships. **Communications** focuses on using Social Media platforms to keep the youth in our community informed of events, impact or enhance their lives.