

A young girl with long, wavy brown hair and a light blue flower in her hair is smiling warmly at the camera. She is seated at a wooden table with a white bowl of vegetables and a small white bowl. To her left, an older woman with glasses and a purple shirt is looking towards the girl. To her right, an older man with a beard is looking down at the table. The background is a rustic stone wall.

Family Giving Traditions

 **FIDELITY** CharitableSM
Make more of a difference

Philanthropy can be a powerful way for families to pass along their shared beliefs and values. It can also provide unique opportunities for families to spend time together, collaborate, and learn more about one another. Integrating philanthropic conversations and activities into family life is an excellent way to encourage healthy attitudes about helping others while instilling a sense of financial responsibility among younger generations. And giving together can be a bonding experience for family members of all generations.

This study was designed to discover how philanthropic practices that respondents experienced in their families growing up influence their giving today. Multiple generations were surveyed—from Millennials to the Silent Generation—to learn which people and practices had the greatest influence on giving habits. Respondents were also asked what they are doing with their families today to encourage charitable activity.

As expected, the presence of strong giving traditions in families affects how respondents give today. But the study also revealed that a family's giving traditions have effects on families themselves.



Key Insights

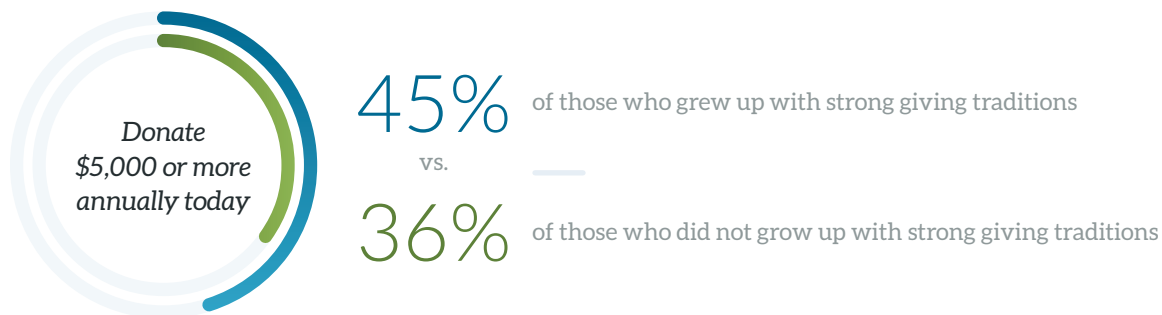
Strong giving traditions matter

Many families engage in philanthropic activities together. Whether they attend church or a charitable event, volunteer together, or talk about what charities to donate to, our research shows that the more respondents engaged in charitable activities with their families growing up, the more likely they are to report today that they are happy and that their families are close.

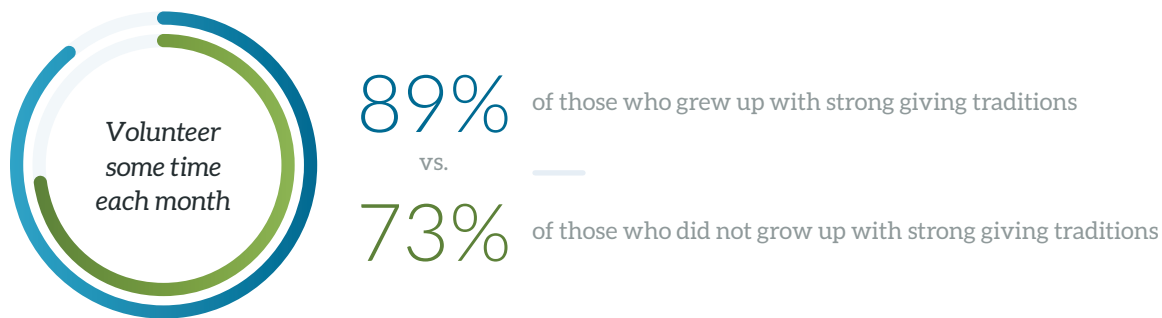
The study asked respondents if they had engaged in any of the below activities with their families growing up and if they engage in any of the activities with their families today. The activities included:

- + Visiting charitable organizations together (house of worship, university, charity events, etc.)
- + Talking as a family about the importance of doing their part
- + Talking about finances in general
- + Using charitable giving as a way of understanding how fortunate their family is
- + Using charitable giving as a way of sharing family beliefs and values
- + Engaging in some type of charitable activity to honor a family member
- + Volunteering time together
- + Discussing ways the family or family members are helping with a particular cause or issue
- + Talking about what charities to donate to
- + Providing an amount of money—a “giving allowance”—that can be used for charitable giving
- + Talking about how much money to donate to specific charities

The study showed that those who grew up in families with strong giving traditions—defined as families that engaged in six or more of the above giving activities—are more likely to give more to charity today.

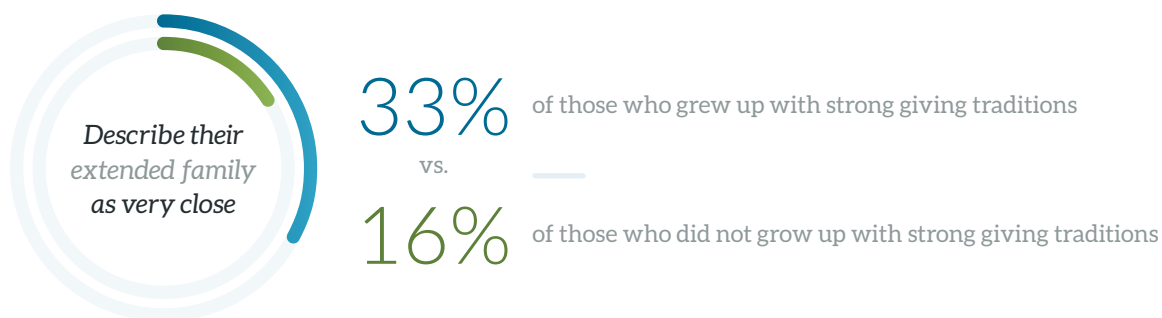


Likewise, those who grew up in families that had strong giving traditions spend more time volunteering today.



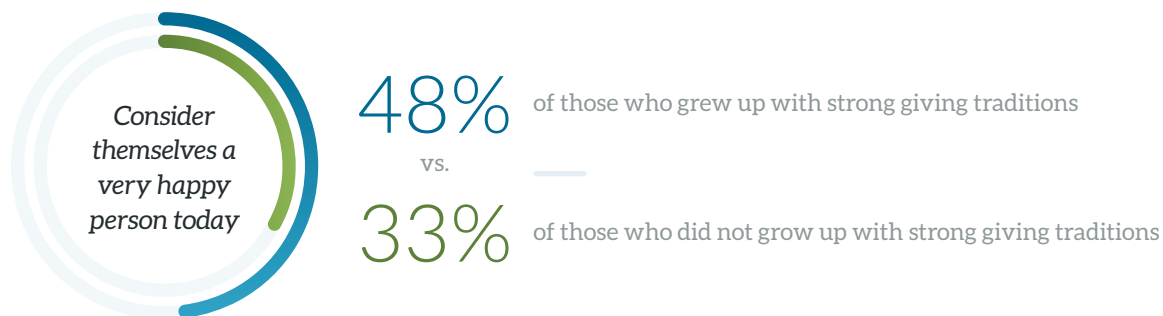
On average those who grew up with strong giving traditions volunteer nearly 8 hours per month vs. 6 hours for those who did not grow up with strong giving traditions.

Those whose families had strong giving traditions also report that their families are closer knit today.



Giving traditions are associated with greater happiness

Many studies have shown that giving brings us joy. This study also shows that people who grew up in families with strong giving traditions are more likely to consider themselves to be very happy.



Parents, your kids are inspired by you

Our research shows that among respondents who grew up with strong giving traditions, parents were their biggest influence. Those who grew up with strong giving traditions were also three times more likely to say their grandparents influenced their giving than those who did not grow up with strong giving traditions (6% vs 2%).



Say a grandparent inspired them



6% of those who grew up with strong giving traditions

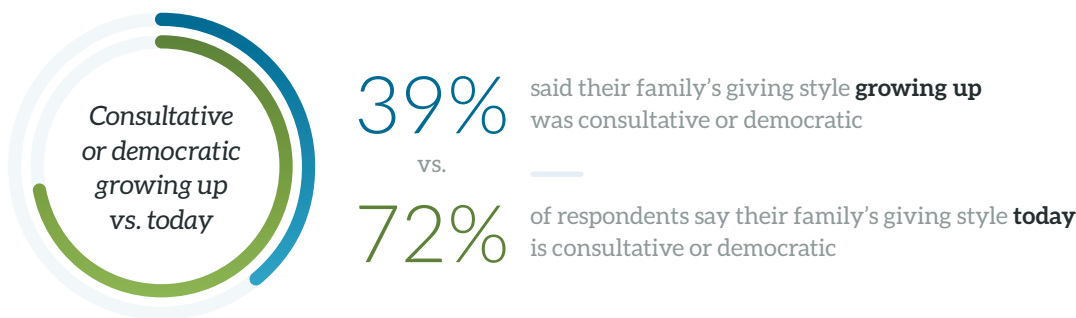
2% of those who did not grow up with strong giving traditions



Families are talking more about giving

Our research shows that families are talking more about giving now.

Only about two-fifths of all respondents characterized their family's giving style growing up as "consultative" (one person received input from the family but made the final decision) or "democratic" (decisions are made together as a family). However, today nearly three-fourths of all respondents report that their own families take a "consultative" or "democratic" approach to philanthropic decisions.



With more discussion about giving occurring within families today, more disagreement on philanthropic activities and approaches is not a surprise. Twenty-two percent of all respondents report conflicting opinions about philanthropy within their families today.

But the good news is that conflict isn't always a bad thing, especially if families have established strong giving traditions. Of those who report experiencing conflict, 54% say that disagreements have no impact on their family, and 16% indicate that it actually has a positive impact. This number is even higher for those who grew up with strong giving traditions, as 25% of those respondents indicated that conflict has a positive impact on their family.



Why? These conflicting opinions frequently offer families the opportunity to address conflict in a positive manner by finding ways to compromise.

60% of those who experience conflict report that their families compromise when faced with a disagreement about giving



How to start your own giving traditions



Do something together.

Our research shows that respondents who engaged in charitable activities with their families growing up—whether going to church, volunteering together, or attending a charitable event—are today more likely to give more to charity and volunteer their time to charitable organizations.

Those who engaged in charitable activities with their families growing up are:

27% ↑ more likely to give more than \$5K to charity annually

22% ↑ more likely to volunteer

Provide kids with a giving allowance.

Providing children with a giving allowance teaches them to prioritize giving and also allows them to plan ahead for philanthropy. In our study, those who grew up receiving a giving allowance give more to charities and volunteer more as adults.

Those who received a giving allowance growing up are:

39% ↑ more likely to give \$5K or more annually to charity

15% ↑ more likely to volunteer

Talk about giving with your family.

Talk about where and how much to give. Discuss why you give and the difference you can make. Talk about your family's values and the importance of doing your part. Think together about what difference your family is making and discuss finances in general. Our study shows that those who engaged in a variety of conversations about philanthropy growing up give more to charity and volunteer more today.

Those who talked about a variety of giving topics with their families growing up are:

22% ↑ more likely to give \$5K or more a year annually to charity

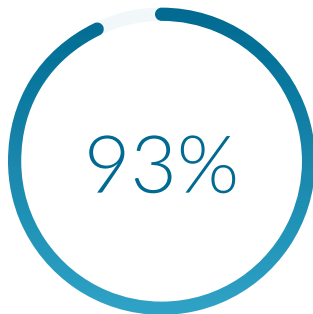
18% ↑ more likely to volunteer

Explore the Data



Teaching about giving

An overwhelming majority of respondents indicated that it is important to teach children about giving. But far fewer respondents reported that they have established giving traditions in their families.



say it is important to teach children about giving



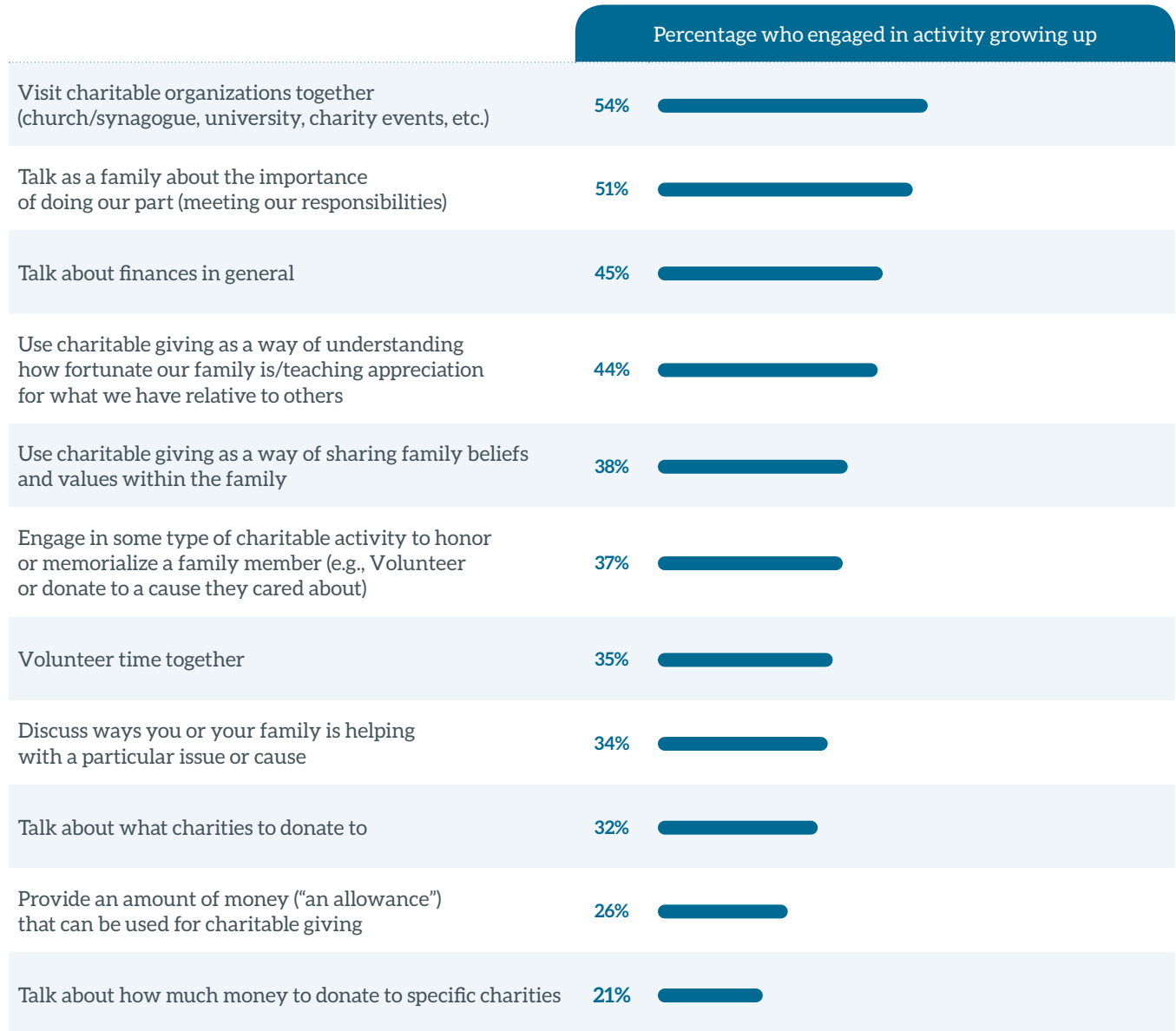
say giving is a family tradition

A variety of giving traditions

Respondents were asked what charitable activities they engaged in while growing up. They were also asked what charitable activities they engage in today and with whom.

When growing up, the three activities that people participated in most frequently with their families were visiting charitable organizations together, talking with their family about the importance of donating, and talking about finances in general.

Question: Did you do the following in your family while you were growing up? Select all that apply.



There are also differences in giving activities across generations. Younger generations (Millennial and Generation X) are more likely than Baby Boomers or the Silent Generation to have participated in all of the traditions measured with their families while growing up.

It appears that families are more apt to talk about and participate together in giving traditions now than they were in the past. Many of those in the Silent Generation were young during the Great Depression and perhaps charitable giving had a very different meaning during that difficult time.

Question: Did you do the following in your family while growing up?

	Percentage who engaged in activity by generation			
	Millennial <small>(Born 1981–1997)</small>	Gen X <small>(Born 1965–1980)</small>	Baby Boomer <small>(Born 1946–1964)</small>	Silent <small>(Born 1928–1945)</small>
Visit charitable organizations together (church/synagogue, university, charity events, etc.)	67%	52%	53%	51%
Talk as a family about the importance of doing our part (meeting our responsibilities)	68%	55%	48%	44%
Talk about finances in general	66%	46%	41%	39%
Use charitable giving as a way of understanding how fortunate our family is/teaching appreciation for what we have relative to others	67%	46%	39%	39%
Use charitable giving as a way of sharing family beliefs and values within the family	63%	40%	34%	32%
Engage in some type of charitable activity to honor or memorialize a family member (e.g., Volunteer or donate to a cause they cared about)	60%	38%	34%	28%
Volunteer time together	64%	40%	30%	22%
Discuss ways you or your family is helping with a particular issue or cause	57%	38%	29%	27%
Talk about what charities to donate to	60%	34%	26%	24%
Receive an amount of money (“an allowance”) that can be used for charitable giving	46%	27%	23%	24%
Talk about how much money to donate to specific charities	48%	24%	17%	13%

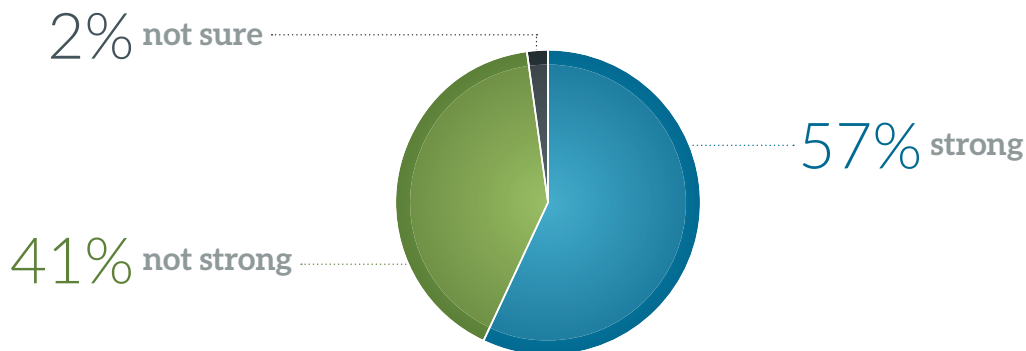


Influence and inspiration

When it comes to giving, respondents were influenced and inspired by previous generations, but indicate that today they are even more engaged with philanthropy than those who inspired them.

A majority of respondents reported that giving behaviors that were passed down strongly influence them today.

Question: How much of an influence are the giving behaviors or traditions that have been passed down from previous generations to you?



Millennials and members of Generation X are more likely than Baby Boomers or the Silent Generation to report being strongly influenced by giving behaviors that were passed down. Not surprisingly, these generations were also much more likely to have engaged in more giving traditions growing up.

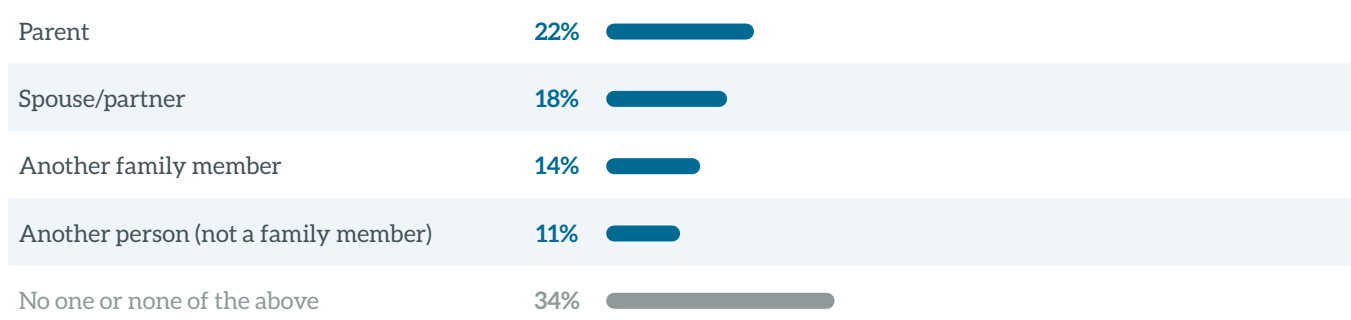
Question: How much of an influence are the giving behaviors or traditions that have been passed down from previous generations to you?

	Millennial <small>(Born 1981–1997)</small>	Gen X <small>(Born 1965–1980)</small>	Baby Boomer <small>(Born 1946–1964)</small>	Silent <small>(Born 1928–1945)</small>
Strong	80%	63%	53%	41%
Not strong	16%	35%	45%	56%
Not sure	3%	2%	2%	3%



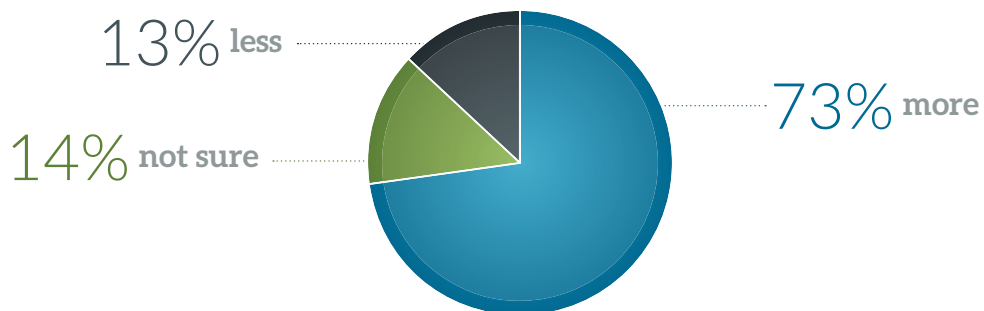
When asked who inspired them the most in their charitable giving, respondents indicated their parents and their spouse/partner provided the greatest influence. Just over a quarter of respondents, however, reported that their giving habits were not influenced by any particular person.

Question: *Who, if anyone, has inspired you the most in your charitable giving approach? Select one response.*



Almost three-fourths of respondents reported that they consider themselves to be more engaged in giving than their parents were.

Question: *In general, are you more or less engaged in giving than your parents are/were?*



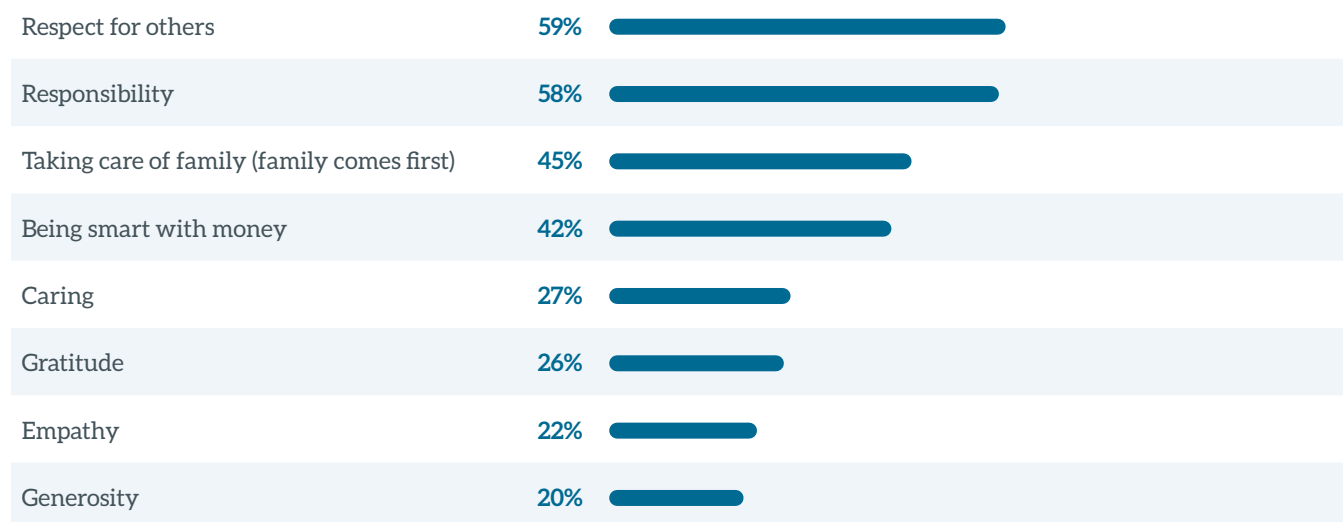


Values

Respondents were asked to consider what values were most important to pass down to the next generation.

Respect for others, responsibility, taking care of family, and being smart with money were among the most important values indicated.

Question: Please rank the top three values that are most important to you to pass on to the next generation.

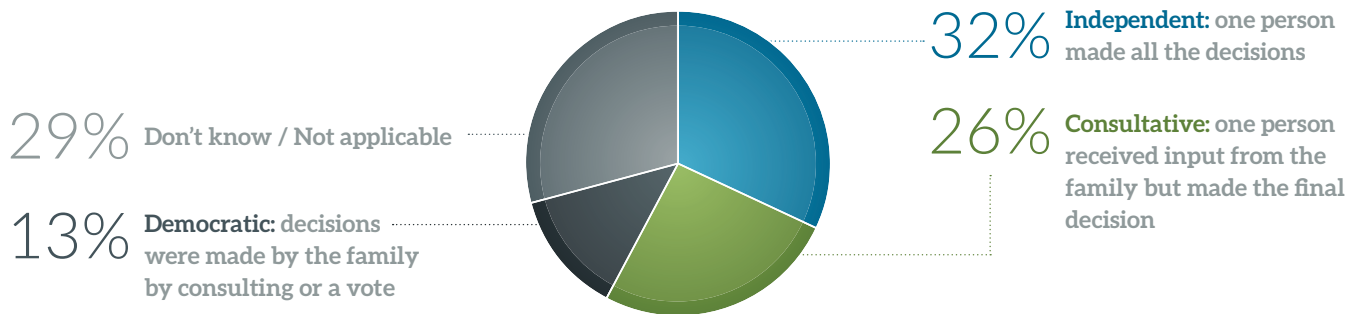


Giving style

Respondents were asked how decisions about giving were made in their families growing up and how they make giving decisions today.

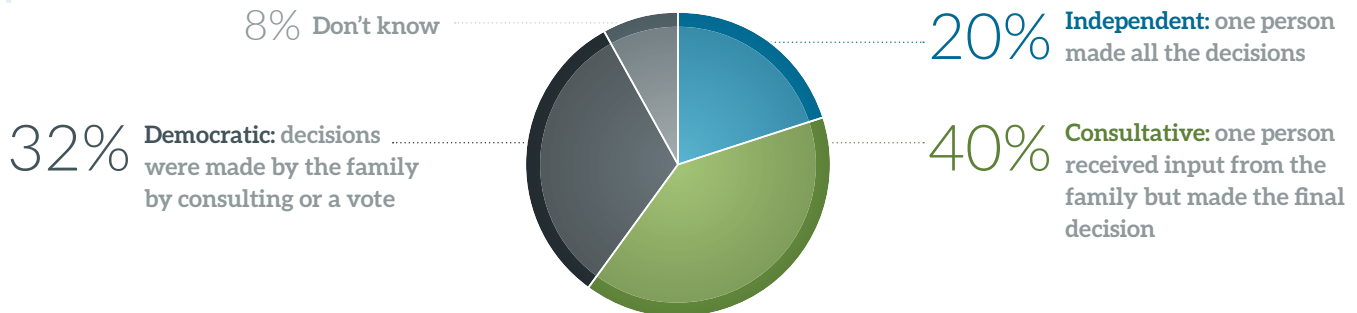
Over a third of respondents reported that their family’s giving style growing up was either consultative or democratic, indicating that input on philanthropic decisions was sought from multiple family members. However, just under a third of respondents indicated that in their family growing up, one person made all of the decisions about charitable giving.

Question: How would you describe your family’s giving style with your family growing up?



Today, however, respondents indicate that their family is much more likely to consider input from family members when making giving decisions, with nearly three-fourths of respondents indicating that their family’s giving style is consultative or democratic.

Question: How would you describe your family’s giving style with your core family now?



Millennial and Generation X respondents are more likely to report that their family’s giving style today is consultative or democratic. Interestingly, Millennials also report a higher incidence of independent decision-making, most likely because this younger generation is less likely to be married or have children who are old enough to provide input.

	Millennial <small>(Born 1981–1997)</small>	Gen X <small>(Born 1965–1980)</small>	Baby Boomer <small>(Born 1946–1964)</small>	Silent <small>(Born 1928–1945)</small>
Independent: one person makes all the decisions	28%	19%	19%	21%
Consultative: one person receives input from the family but makes the final decision	39%	45%	38%	39%
Democratic: decisions are made by the family by consulting or a vote	29%	30%	34%	31%
Don't know	5%	6%	8%	10%



Methodology

This report is based on a 2018 survey of 3,000 consumers who donate to charity and who itemized charitable deductions on their most recent federal income tax returns.

The survey was conducted by Artemis Strategy Group (www.ArtemisSG.com), an independent research firm.

About Fidelity Charitable

Fidelity Charitable is an independent public charity that has helped donors support more than 255,000 nonprofit organizations with nearly \$30 billion in grants. Established in 1991, Fidelity Charitable launched the first national donor-advised fund program. The organization's mission is to grow the American tradition of philanthropy by providing programs that make charitable giving accessible, simple, and effective.

Fidelity Charitable is the brand name for Fidelity® Charitable Gift Fund, an independent public charity with a donor-advised fund program. Various Fidelity companies provide services to Fidelity Charitable. The Fidelity Charitable name and logo and Fidelity are registered service marks of FMR LLC, used by Fidelity Charitable under license. 862050.1.0