

## Latch Key Kids on the Rise? National Survey Shows Majority of Educated Adults Think There Are More Unsupervised Teens Today Than a Generation Ago

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Taco Bell Foundation(TM) Reaches \$15 Million Milestone to Support Teen After-School Programs at Boys & Girls Clubs

Does "latch key kid" -- a phrase popularized two decades ago for a generation of youth left unsupervised after school - still have relevance in the U.S.? According to many educated adults, there seem to be more teens at home alone today than there were a generation ago.

In the "Taco Bell Foundation Teen Survey," recently conducted by Kelton Research, nearly 75 percent of American college graduates believe today's teenagers have far less supervision than previous generations. When asked what they thought today's teens were doing after school, 60 percent of adults agreed kids were engaging in non-social activities such as playing video games, watching TV or surfing the Internet.

This is supported by research showing the average teen in the United States is home alone after school at least two days per week.(1) In fact, a large number of those youth are spending an average of five hours daily in front of the TV, on the computer or playing video games.(2)

What is the solution? Nine out of 10 adults (89 percent) surveyed agree that getting teens involved in an after-school program will help them be more creative, responsible and happier adults. And studies have shown that the majority of teens would watch less TV and play fewer video games if they had other options after school.(3)

Through its national partnership with Boys & Girls Clubs of America, the Taco Bell Foundation has provided \$15 million toward teen after-school programs nationwide. Since 1995, this funding has impacted the lives of more than one million teens.

"The support of the Taco Bell Foundation has dramatically increased the ability of our Clubs to better serve teens, helping them become caring, productive adults," said Roxanne Spillett, president of Boys & Girls Clubs of America. "Programs such as Keystoning, financial literacy and CareerLaunch offer teens the opportunity to pursue higher education and positive lifestyles."

"We know that teens are happier, more successful and better-adjusted when they have the opportunity to interact with others after school in a positive, supervised environment like Boys & Girls Clubs," said Emil Brolick, president of Taco Bell Corp. and the Taco Bell Foundation. "The Taco Bell Foundation is proud to be the leading supporter of teen programs at the Clubs, raising \$15 million to support their great work."

Celebrating 10 years of helping youth, the Taco Bell Foundation was the first corporate partner to develop a national program with Boys & Girls Clubs of America to foster educational, career and service opportunities for teens. Through this partnership, the Taco Bell Foundation supports more than 1,000 Keystone Clubs -- leadership development groups for youth ages 14-18 -- at Boys & Girls Clubs nationwide. Keystone members elect officers, choose their own activities and plan and implement community service projects.

Additionally, there are 400 Taco Bell TEENSUPREME Centers found at Boys & Girls Clubs across the country. Each center has its own dedicated staff and teen-oriented programming designed for the unique needs of its members.

### About the Survey

"The Taco Bell Foundation Teen Survey" was conducted by Kelton Research on 1,000 U.S. residents 18 years of age and older and took place in April 2005 using Random Digit Dialing of both listed and unlisted numbers. In this particular study, the chances are 95 in 100 that a survey result does not vary, plus or minus, by more than 3.2 percentage points from the result that would be obtained if interviews had been conducted with all persons in the universe represented by the sample.

### Background

Funding for teen programs comes from Taco Bell customer donations and the support of Taco Bell, its employees and franchisees. Canisters are placed in all company-owned and participating franchise restaurants so patrons can support the program by donating their change. Additionally, franchisees have developed fundraising and volunteer opportunities within their own communities to support local Boys & Girls Clubs.

Boys & Girls Clubs of America comprises a national network of some 3,700 neighborhood-based facilities annually serving more than 4.4 million young people, primarily from disadvantaged circumstances. The Clubs provide guidance-oriented character development programs on a daily basis for children 6-18-years old, conducted by full-time professional staff. Key Boys & Girls Club programs, such as Youth of the Year, emphasize character and leadership development, education and career enhancement, health and life skills, the arts, and sports, fitness and recreation.

Taco Bell Foundation, a non-profit organization, was established by Taco Bell Corp. as a public charity in 1992 to reach out and help the communities it serves. For more information about the Taco Bell Foundation, visit [www.teensupreme.org](http://www.teensupreme.org).

1. After School for America's Teens Survey (2001). See Ericson, N. (2001). The YMCA's Teen Action Agenda. Fact Sheet. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention.
2. After-School Programs: Keeping Children Safe and Smart. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education, 2000
3. Generation M: Media in the Lives of 8-18 Year Olds (2004) Kaiser Family Foundation.

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