Americans’ Favorite Ways to Give to Charity

Nearly 1 in 4 Has Increased Contributions This Year

NEW YORK – November 28, 2017 – Money, stuff or time: What are U.S. adults’ favorite ways to give to charity? 40% typically donate money, 35% like to contribute clothes/food/other goods and 19% prefer to volunteer their time, according to a new Bankrate.com report which coincides with Giving Tuesday. In all, 96% of Americans say they make charitable contributions. Click here for more information:


Millennials (ages 18-36) have the strongest preferences for donating clothes/food/other goods (41%) and volunteering their time (27%). They’re the least likely to favor monetary donations (29%). By contrast, 48% of Baby Boomers (ages 53-71) put money #1 and just 14% fancy volunteering their time.

Men are 13 percentage points more likely than women to say that money is their preferred method of giving. However, women are 11 percentage points more apt to donate clothes/food/other goods.

22% of American adults are giving more in 2017 than they did last year, almost twice as many as the 12% who are giving less. Households with annual income of $75,000 or more have been particularly generous; 37% upped their donations and just 3% decreased them.

“Overall, the most popular reason people gave more is because their income rose, followed by a desire to support victims of recent hurricanes and other disasters,” said Bankrate.com analyst Robin Saks Frankel. “The most common explanations for giving less all involve having less money to spare, such as reduced income, higher expenses or the need to save more.”

This study was conducted for Bankrate.com via landline and cell phone by SSRS on its Omnibus survey platform. Interviews were conducted from November 8 - 12, 2017 among a sample of 1,010 respondents. The margin of error for total respondents is +/- 3.65% at the 95% confidence level. SSRS Omnibus is a national, weekly, dual-frame bilingual telephone survey. All SSRS Omnibus data are weighted to represent the target population.

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