Young Americans Don’t Rely on Social Influencers During Pandemic, Says Second COVID-19 (Coronavirus) Study

Cause and Social Influence Initiative Releases Key Findings of Second Study of Actions by Young Americans

INDIANAPOLIS (APRIL 21, 2020) – As reported by the research sample, online influencers are not driving the behaviors of young Americans (age 18-30) during the COVID-19 (Coronavirus) pandemic. This is one of the key findings of Influencing Young Americans to Act: Special COVID-19 Research Report, April 2020, the second research study in a four-part series by the Cause and Social Influence initiative.

This report, issued one month after the initiative's initial study, reveals top findings from the actions taken by young adults in the three weeks preceding April 17, or five weeks after the White House officially declared the pandemic.

This second research wave reaffirms the weakened influence of online influencers found in the earlier study and now reveals who is exerting influence over how this age cohort is acting to support others and to prevent the virus from spreading.

Key Findings

1. Almost 60% of young Americans were not receiving news about COVID-19 from online influencers. This finding held true from the first study even as celebrities and online influencers began active promotions.

2. Local government had the most influence on whether young Americans acted to stop the spread of COVID-19. Instead of influencers or celebrities, young people are listening to local governments and family members to learn what to do to stop the spread of the virus.
3. **Supporting local business is the best way young Americans seek to support others during the pandemic.** Young adults see their consumer decisions and social media activity as ways to help people. At the same time, a third of respondents said they have taken no actions that might help others.

4. **Healthcare reform tops the list of social issues young Americans made donations to, while they volunteered (helped in person or online) most for animals/animal rights.** A small percentage of young Americans (12%) chose to financially support healthcare reform, food banks and animal rights; the smaller percentages who volunteered did so for climate change, animal rights and food banks/healthcare reform (6% each).


The research team will field this same survey 30 and 60 days from now to understand changes in attitude and behaviors. To download the first (March 2020) research brief, visit [causeandsocialinfluence.com/2020research](http://causeandsocialinfluence.com/2020research).

**Methodology**

For this second phase of the research, a quantitative approach was taken with an online survey fielded from 6 PM to 10 PM EST on April 17, 2020, to collect data about the actions taken by young Americans (ages 18-30) related to COVID-19 (Coronavirus) during the preceding one to three weeks. The survey had 1,190 respondents from a nationally representative sample based on census-projected ethnic and demographic composition. With this response rate, the data presented has a 95% confidence interval and 3% margin of error. Visit [causeandsocialinfluence.com/research-april2020](http://causeandsocialinfluence.com/research-april2020) for more information on methodology.

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**About the Cause & Social Influence Initiative:** The Cause & Social Influence Initiative, a program of INFLUENCE|SG, delivers insights into how young Americans (18-30) are moved to action for today’s social issues and movements by companies and causes. By analyzing the movements, moments and campaigns that engage young Americans, leaders of brands and causes can have a greater influence on the issues affecting the largest generation in America. Find more information about our research at causeandsocialinfluence.com and @causeinfluence.