

## Top 5 Reasons YOUth Should Vote

Why vote? We'll tell you why...

From [Mike Hardcastle](#), former About.com Guide

You live in a democracy and that means that you get a say in who runs your country, and by way of this privilege you also get a say about how your country is run. It is very easy to be blase about your right to vote and take a "whatever, who cares" kind of attitude about it but you shouldn't brush this great honor off so quickly. Sure registering can be a bit of a chore, and yes, you have to head down to a polling station on voting day to pull your lever which takes some time out of your day and may cost you a few bucks in gas, but whether you know it or not these are very small prices to pay for the right to vote. In some countries people are literally dying to be able to cast a ballot and make a difference. Here, we list five very good reasons that every eligible young person should get out and vote.

### **The youth vote is sadly underestimated by party analysts.**

Yes, it is true, the trend analysts who tell party spindoctors where to target their advertising dollars and public relations efforts traditionally over-look the youth market. Why? Because the sad reality is that election year after election year the percentage of eligible youth who actually register and vote is small when compared with other demographics. This doesn't mean the youth market isn't a force, just that it isn't a main motivator in the drafting of campaign platforms and pre-election advertising. So, like any self-respecting rebellious young person the natural thing to do is go against the grain and do the unexpected. Keep them on their toes, shock them into the 21st century and get out and vote!

### **The biggest election issues often directly effect the youth of the nation.**

The war in Iraq (young soldiers are the ones dying), education funding both public school and post-secondary, employment and job training programs, and reproductive rights issues are just a few of the current hot topics that directly effect the quality of your life RIGHT NOW. Think about the future and the world you will one day "inherit" from the power generation and you can add environmental concerns, fossil fuel consumption, farming and livestock funding (think the food supply is shrinking with every farm that can't sustain itself) and the list just gets longer. Add any issues that are near and dear to your heart on a personal level and the list becomes a little overwhelming. Don't vote and you effectively kiss away your ability to have any influence as to how these issues play out in your world, and dude, that's just lame.

### **The only way democracy works is if citizens, young and old, are active participants.**

Yeah, yeah, yeah, this one is an oldy, but hey let's face it, it's also a goody. A government by the people, for the people just can't work without the people. This is a simple fact. Like a car without an engine, or a computer without a hard drive, a democracy without voters is just a shell and has no power. While it is easy to say "one vote doesn't make a difference" the reality is that every vote counts... have you heard of Florida? Also you have to remember that as an individual your vote may seem to be little more than a whisper but when your vote is combined with the votes of others who share your views it becomes a voice and the more like-voters there are the louder that voice grows. So get out there and make the youth vote be heard.

### **If you don't vote you really have no right to complain about government decisions you don't like (no matter how much they actually suck).**

OK, if there is one thing that is really annoying to us actual voters it is the endless ramblings on the bad political policy of a current government spewing from the mouths of eligible voters who never bothered to cast a ballot. If you don't vote it is like saying you don't care how your country is run, so if you don't care where do you get the idea that you can complain when something happens that you don't like? If you don't vote you really have no right complaining about anything the government does and if your like most young people you like complaining and have it down to a fine art. Want the right to complain when TPTB (the powers that be) make a truly heinous decision? Then you must exercise your right to vote.

### **Bottom line: you should vote because you can.**

Voting is a tremendous gift. Believe it or not, young people just like you in other countries actually fight and even die for this right; a right that so many youth in democratic nations take for granted. You should vote because you can, if you don't you may one day wake up in a country where you can't. It can (and has) happened. Enough said!

Need more information? Help registering? Understanding registration deadlines in your state? Just want to know the issues? Check out these fine websites created with YOUth in mind.

[Top 5 Youth Vote Websites](#)<sup>1</sup>

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1. <http://teenadvice.about.com/od/teenlifeqaandqas/tp/youthvote2004.htm>