

# Mason-Dixon Polling and Research - Virginia Poll Results

*To determine public opinion on children's issues in Virginia, the Every Child Matters Education Fund commissioned Mason-Dixon Polling and Research to conduct a statewide telephone survey. 625 registered voters were selected at random, representing a cross-section of the public who say they are likely to vote in the 2005 general election. Conducted from July 26<sup>th</sup> to July 28<sup>th</sup>, 2005, the survey has a margin of error of ± 3.9 percent.*

**S1** Are you registered to vote at this address in the state of Virginia? Yes ..... 100%  
No → **Terminate**

**S2** In November, there will be an election for state and local offices. How likely are you to vote in this election – will you definitely vote, probably vote, are the chance 50-50, or will you not vote in this election? Definitely Vote ..... 80%  
Probably Vote ..... 20

50-50 .....	<b>TERMINATE</b>
Not Vote .....	
(Depends) .....	
(Don't Know) .....	

**Q1** Do you consider yourself to be a Republican, Independent, or a Democrat?  
**(If Democrat/Republican)** Do you consider yourself to be a strong (Democrat/Republican) or a not so strong (Democrat/Republican)?  
**(If Independent)** Do you lean more towards the Republican Party or the Democratic Party?

Strong Republican ..... 31%  
Weak Republican ..... 5  
Ind Republican ..... 7  
Independent ..... 18  
Ind Democrat ..... 6  
Weak Democrat ..... 4  
Strong Democrat ..... 27  
(Other) ..... 1  
(Don't Know) ..... -

**Total Republican** ..... 36%  
**Total Independent** ..... 32  
**Total Democrat** ..... 32

**Q2** Would you say that things in Virginia are on the right track or do you think things are on the wrong track? Right Track ..... 58%  
Wrong Track ..... 35  
(Depends) ..... 5  
(Don't Know) ..... 2

**Q4-Q5** Now I am going to read you some issues currently facing the state of Virginia that the next Governor and state legislature will have to deal with. Please tell me which one you find most important. **[READ LIST]** Which is the most important issue to you? **(If Choice)** And what is the second most important issue?

Ranked by 'Total Importance'	<u>Most Important</u>	<u>Total Important</u>
• Improving the health, education, and safety of children .....	33%	65%
• Strengthening the economy and creating jobs .....	32	57
• Building new roads and reducing traffic congestion .....	20	45
• Reducing property taxes .....	13	28
• Handling issues relating to the death penalty.....	*	2
(Other) .....	-	*
(Don't Know) .....	1	2
NO SECOND RESPONSE .....		1

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<p><b>Q6</b> How would you rate the condition of children in the state of Virginia? By that I mean consider the conditions of Virginia’s children from around the state and their access to a good education, health care, and the opportunity for a good start in life. Would you rate the conditions for children in Virginia as excellent, good, only fair, or poor?</p>	<p>Excellent ..... 11% Good ..... 58 Only fair ..... 23 Poor ..... 7 (Don't Know) ..... 2</p> <p><b>Excellent/Good..... 68%</b> <b>Fair/Poor ..... 29</b></p>
<p><b>Q7</b> Over the past 5 years or so, would say that the conditions for children in Virginia have improved, deteriorated, or stayed about the same?</p>	<p>Improved ..... 33% Deteriorated ..... 15 Stayed the same ..... 49 (Don't Know) ..... 3</p>
<p><b>Q8</b> Which comes closer to your view about how children’s needs – such as health care, child abuse prevention, pre-school education, and afterschool programs – are addressed in the Virginia state legislature: ➤ The legislature does a lot to help children in working families, OR..... ➤ The legislature does not do enough to help children in working families? .....</p>	<p>24% 56 2 18</p> <p>(Depends) ..... (Don't Know) .....</p>
<p><b>Q9</b> In making a voting decision, how important are issues of child well-being such as child abuse prevention, child health care, pre-school education and afterschool programs: ➤ Very important, they are a primary factor in deciding how you vote ➤ Somewhat important, they are one of several issues you consider ➤ Not very important, they are not necessarily issues you consider ➤ Not at all important, they are just not a consideration in deciding how you vote?</p>	<p>Very important..... 38% Somewhat important ... 48 Not very important..... 8 Not important at all..... 5 (Don't Know) ..... *</p> <p><b>Total Important..... 87%</b> <b>Total Not Important... 13</b></p>

**Q10-Q15** Now I am going to read a list of candidates and office holders. Please tell me how familiar you are with each of their positions on children’s issues such as childcare, health care, child abuse, and funding for afterschool and pre-school education programs. The first name is **(Read item)** How familiar are you with where he stands on children’s issues – very familiar, somewhat familiar, not too familiar, or not familiar at all?

Ranked by 'Total Familiar'	<u>Very Familiar</u>	<u>Somewhat Familiar</u>	<u>Not Too Familiar</u>	<u>Not Familiar at All</u>	<u>(DK)</u>	<u>Total Familiar</u>	<u>Total Not Familiar</u>
• Mark Warner .....	26%	31	12	30	2	<b>57%</b>	<b>41</b>
• George Allen .....	17%	33	10	37	3	<b>51%</b>	<b>47</b>
• John Warner .....	22%	28	11	36	3	<b>50%</b>	<b>47</b>
• Jerry Kilgore.....	8%	35	13	41	3	<b>43%</b>	<b>55</b>
• Tim Kaine.....	9%	32	16	39	3	<b>41%</b>	<b>55</b>
• Russell Potts.....	3%	7	19	67	5	<b>9%</b>	<b>86</b>

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**Q16-Q26** Now I am going to read you some legislative proposals and please tell me how important it is for the next Governor and the state legislature to provide leadership and make that issue a priority next year. How important it is for the next Governor and the state legislature to provide leadership and make **(Read Item)** a priority next year – very important, somewhat important, not too important, or not important at all?

Ranked by 'Total Important'	<u>Very</u>	<u>Some- what</u>	<u>Not Very</u>	<u>Not at All</u>	<u>(DK)</u>	<u>Total Impt</u>	<u>Total Not Impt</u>
• Expand the Virginia Child Health Insurance Program so that all uninsured children have access to health care .....	66%	25	7	2	*	<b>91%</b>	<b>9</b>
• Provide scholarships and other incentives to recruit and prepare teachers for so all schools can meet quality educational standards. ....	63%	27	6	4	*	<b>89%</b>	<b>10</b>
• Expand afterschool programs that keep kids safe, inspire kids to learn, and provide enriching activities. ....	58%	28	8	7	*	<b>85%</b>	<b>14</b>
• Reduce child abuse and neglect by helping new parents connect with a trained mentor who can help them learn the basics of good parenting and provide emotional support. ....	56%	29	10	5	1	<b>85%</b>	<b>15</b>
• Increase funding for public schools to reduce class size and improve the school buildings and other infrastructure .....	63%	21	8	7	1	<b>84%</b>	<b>16</b>
• Help working parents by improving the quality and accessibility of childcare. ....	51%	33	7	9	*	<b>84%</b>	<b>16</b>
• Recruit, train, and support more foster and adoptive families. ....	46%	37	10	5	1	<b>83%</b>	<b>15</b>
• Expand state efforts to improve children's nutrition and combat childhood obesity. ....	48%	34	10	7	*	<b>82%</b>	<b>17</b>
• Expand community-based mental health services for children. ....	46%	36	9	8	1	<b>82%</b>	<b>17</b>
• Expand pre-school in Virginia so that parents who want their children to attend a high-quality program can do so. ....	46%	36	9	9	1	<b>81%</b>	<b>18</b>
• Expand public health insurance coverage to additional low-income pregnant women. ....	43%	31	13	12	1	<b>74%</b>	<b>25</b>

**Q27** Which concerns you more – that Virginia's children will not have adequate educational opportunities, health coverage, and protection from abuse, **or** that state taxes will be too high?

Not best health/educ.....	63%
Taxes are too high.....	22
(Both).....	13
(Neither).....	1
(Don't Know).....	1

Now I am going to turn to the specific issue of afterschool programs for school-aged children.

**Q28** How concerned are you that children and teens are unsupervised after school with too much unstructured time – very concerned, somewhat concerned, a little concerned, or not concerned at all?

Very concerned.....	50%
Somewhat concerned.....	30
Not too concerned.....	9
Not concerned at all.....	10
(Don't Know).....	*
<b>Total Concerned.....</b>	<b>80%</b>
<b>Total Not Concerned.....</b>	<b>20</b>

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**Q29** Thinking about the children and the hours after school, would you say that afterschool programs are essential for your community? Yes..... 72%  
 No ..... 22  
 (Don't Know) ..... 6

**Q30** Do you think there are more than enough, enough, not enough afterschool programs available for children and teens in Virginia today? More than enough..... 4%  
 Enough ..... 23  
 Not enough ..... 51  
 (Don't Know) ..... 21

**Q31-Q37** Now I am going to read you some about afterschool programs in Virginia. For each one, I want you to tell me how persuasive you find it as a reason to support greater funding for afterschool programs in Virginia. **(Read Item)** How persuasive do you find that – very persuasive, somewhat persuasive, not too persuasive, or not persuasive at all?

Ranked by 'Total Persuasive'	<u>Very</u>	<u>Some- what</u>	<u>Not Very</u>	<u>Not at All</u>	<u>(DK)</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Total Not</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Everyday in Virginia one in four children are alone after school. It's during these hours that juvenile crime rates triple, and most experimentation with drugs, alcohol and sexual activity takes place. It's a fact, children in afterschool programs are less likely to get in trouble and more likely to stay in school. In afterschool programs, they receive moral guidance from caring adults and mentors.....</li> </ul>	60%	27	6	6	1	<b>87%</b>	<b>12</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Afterschool programs offer opportunities to learn; to socialize and have fun; to explore arts, music, careers and more. Studies have shown that children in afterschool programs do better in school, achieve higher levels of education, and have greater expectations for the future.....</li> </ul>	50%	35	9	5	1	<b>85%</b>	<b>13</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Afterschool programs help kids succeed in school and prepare them for success in college and the workplace by offering opportunities to strengthen basic skills, provide help with homework, access to computers and technology and interaction with trained and skilled tutors.....</li> </ul>	47%	37	8	7	1	<b>84%</b>	<b>16</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Virginia's families work hard to provide for their children, often struggling to balance work and family responsibilities. Afterschool programs help relieve the stresses on working families, giving parents peace of mind by keeping their kids safe and engaged.....</li> </ul>	50%	32	8	9	1	<b>82%</b>	<b>17</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Investing in afterschool programs makes economic sense. For every dollar invested in a quality program, taxpayers save 3 - 5 dollars in reduced crime and education costs and helps brake the cycle of welfare dependency.....</li> </ul>	49%	28	11	10	2	<b>77%</b>	<b>21</b>

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**Q31-Q37** Now I am going to read you some about afterschool programs in Virginia. For each one, I want you to tell me how persuasive you find it as a reason to support greater funding for afterschool programs in Virginia. **(Read Item)** How persuasive do you find that – very persuasive, somewhat persuasive, not too persuasive, or not persuasive at all?

Ranked by 'Total Persuasive'	<u>Very</u>	<u>Some- what</u>	<u>Not Very</u>	<u>Not at All</u>	<u>(DK)</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Total Not</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Children deserve to be kept safe, and to get the guidance of caring adults. We're disappointing our young people, and shortchanging our future by ignoring what happens to them after the school bell rings. Kids in afterschool programs get into less trouble and achieve greater success. Yet only 9 percent of Virginia kids are in afterschool programs. ....</li> </ul>	47%	26	17	8	2	<b>73%</b>	<b>25</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Childhood obesity is a national epidemic. Afterschool programs provide opportunities for physical activity; offer nutrition education and even provide healthy snacks – all of which promote healthy lifestyles. ....</li> </ul>	39%	29	18	12	1	<b>68%</b>	<b>31</b>

**Q38** How important will it be for you to hear what the candidates for Governor and Virginia House of Delegates plan do to strengthen and expand Virginia's afterschool programs – very important, somewhat important, not too important, or not important at all?

Very important .....	48%
Somewhat important.....	33
Not very important .....	12
Not important at all.....	7
(Don't Know) .....	*

**Total Important..... 80%**  
**Total Not Important..... 19**

**Q39** Would you favor or oppose having your property taxes increased by one hundred dollars per year to guarantee that for every child who wanted to attend an afterschool program in Virginia, they could do so? **(If favor/oppose)** Would you strongly **(favor/oppose)** or only somewhat **(favor/oppose)** that?

Strongly favor.....	27%
Somewhat favor.....	25
Somewhat oppose.....	20
Strongly oppose.....	25
(Don't Know) .....	2

**Total Favor ..... 53%**  
**Total Oppose..... 46**

**Q40** Finally, I am going to read you a statement and I want you to tell me whether you agree or disagree with that statement:

“It is our moral responsibility to make sure all children have the opportunity to succeed and it is important for government to invest in children's programs proven to reduce child abuse, improve child health, and better educate our children.” Do you agree or disagree with that statement? **(If agree/disagree)** Do you strongly or only somewhat **(agree/disagree)** with that?

Strongly agree .....	52%
Somewhat agree.....	26
Somewhat disagree.....	9
Strongly disagree.....	10
(Depends) .....	1
(Don't Know) .....	1

**Total Agree ..... 78%**  
**Total Disagree..... 20**

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Now I have a few final questions for statistical purposes only.

<b>Q41</b>	Sex ( <b>Observation</b> )	Male ..... 48% Female..... 52
<b>Q42</b>	What is your age?	18-29..... 13% 30-44..... 24 45-54..... 22 55-64..... 21 65+ ..... 20 (DK/Refused)..... 1
<b>Q43</b>	Are you currently employed, unemployed, retired, or a homemaker?	Employed..... 59% Unemployed..... 6 Retired ..... 20 Homemaker ..... 14 (Other) ..... 1 (DK/Refused)..... *
<b>Q44</b>	Are you currently married, separated, divorced, widowed, or have you never been married?	Married..... 73% Sep/Div/Wid..... 16 Never married ..... 11 (DK/Refused)..... *
<b>Q45</b>	Are you the parent of a child under 18 currently living in your household?	Yes..... 35% No ..... 64 (DK/Refused)..... *
<b>Q46</b>	Are you a grandparent of a child under 18?	Yes..... 29% No ..... 70 (DK/Refused)..... *
<b>Q47</b>	What was the last grade you completed in school?	Less than HS ..... 2% High school graduate..... 24 Some college/Technical .... 20 College graduate (4 yr) ..... 32 Graduate degree..... 21 Refused ..... 1
<b>Q48</b>	Do you consider yourself liberal, somewhat liberal, moderate, somewhat conservative, or conservative?	Liberal ..... 15% Somewhat liberal ..... 12 Moderate..... 25 Somewhat conservative..... 24 Conservative..... 23 (DK/Refused)..... 2  <b>Total Liberal ..... 26%</b> <b>Total Conservative..... 46</b>
<b>Q49</b>	In terms of your race or ethnicity, Do you generally consider yourself: <b>(READ CHOICES)</b>	White..... 82% Black ..... 16 Hispanic or Latino ..... 1 (Other) ..... 1 (Refused)..... 1

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Q50	Is your total household income: (READ CHOICES)	Less than \$25,000 .....	9%
		\$25,000-\$34,999.....	9
		\$35,000-\$49,999.....	12
		\$50,000-\$74,999.....	16
		\$75,000-\$99,999.....	17
		\$100,000+ .....	22
		(Refused).....	15
Q51	Region	Fairfax County.....	12%
		Other Northern Virginia .....	15
		Central Virginia.....	12
		Piedmont.....	15
		Tidewater/Hampton Roads .....	22
		Shenandoah Valley.....	12
		Southwest Blue Ridge Highlands.....	12