

## ABSTRACT

### VOLUNTEERING AND SUBJECTIVE WELL-BEING

The study of subjective well-being (SWB) represents a paradigm shift for psychology; rather than eliminating pathology, research efforts focus on achieving well-being. Comparison to less fortunate others and counting one's "blessings" appear to engage evaluative processes that increase levels of SWB. Volunteering opportunities, which may create or increase such evaluative processes, thus may be associated with greater SWB. Using archival data (N=236) from Berkeley Guidance Study, Berkeley Growth Study, and Oakland Growth Study members, the relationships between volunteering (yes/no and number of hours), feeling comfortable with close relationships, and SWB (life satisfaction, positive affect, and negative affect) were examined. Physical health and income were also included in analysis to control for possible confounds. Results from a set of 12 multiple regressions indicate that volunteering does positively predict one aspect of SWB, life satisfaction, but feeling comfortable with close relationships is a stronger predictor of SWB overall.

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