

## 2008 primaries attract young Utah voters



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SALT LAKE CITY (ABC 4 News) - A lot of 2008's voter outreach has been focused on young voters.

That's because politicians know this time around, their voices and their votes may well determine the outcome of the election.

At the University of Utah, they actually have a voter outreach program to encourage young people to vote and program workers say it's not easy to get teens and "twenty-somethings" to the polls.



(ABC 4 News)

The rule of thumb for the outreach program say grassroots efforts work best, which means using non-traditional media and word of mouth.

They are the future of this country, and no matter their candidate of choice or party affiliation, presidential hopefuls know they bring a certain energy and optimism to the political arena. "They are excited to vote they're excited to participate. It's just a general feeling of excitement. I think that's reflective of candidates making the effort to personalize their message to our generation," says student Shawn Strong.

Tuesday at the University of Utah polling station, workers were seeing double the students from years past, largely due to the campus outreach program.

"We use a lot of non traditional media like FaceBook, MySpace, email, text messaging, to encourage students to get out and vote and it seems to be very effective," says poll worker Bryson Morgan.

Those students were coming in groups. Some say they're voting because their friends are. The point is: they're voting.

"We don't hear a lot about the war. My dad's out in Iraq right now and I support him wholeheartedly, but I don't understand why he's out there," says student Cassie Wright.

Many students are voting for specific reasons.

"You really can't complain about our country and how it's going unless you participate in the election process," says student Cameron Bailey.

Some just want be part of the process.

"I would say to the youth, 'If you're not going to get excited about this election, then when are

you?' It couldn't be more exciting and the stakes couldn't be higher," says Morgan.

Historically, this is not the first time a lot of emphasis has been placed on young voters. Research shows that they usually fall in line with their parent's party affiliation or candidate of choice.

This is not shocking, but young people are more likely to vote if their friends are. Experts say young voters also form good habits and more likely to vote for the rest of their lives.