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## Analysis Report: New American Dream Survey 2014

*This document highlights the key findings from a nationally representative and census-balanced Internet and telephone study conducted in March and April 2014 of 1,821 Americans 18 years of age and older. The poll was conducted by PolicyInteractive of Eugene, Oregon for the Center for a New American Dream. Learn more about the project at [www.newdream.org/poll2014](http://www.newdream.org/poll2014).*

### **1. The majority of Americans believe that it is more difficult to achieve the American Dream than it was 10 years ago, primarily due to the high costs of education and healthcare.**

When questioned if they believe it is more or less difficult to achieve the American Dream than 10 years ago (the time of CNAD's 2004 survey) Americans indicated that the American Dream has become significantly more difficult to achieve:

**Harder: 79.8%**

Easier: 5.5%

The same: 11.9%

Don't know: 2.8%

This is in comparison to the 2004 survey:

**Harder: 64%**

Easier: 17%

The same: 15%

Don't know: 4%

The primary causes of the American Dream being out of reach? The high cost of necessary services, such as education and healthcare. When asked about the major reasons why the American Dream seemed unattainable, Americans indicated the following as the top reasons:

**The high cost of education: 72.2%**

**The high cost of health care: 71.8%**

**Wages for workers are too low: 67.2%**

**We have a materialistic culture: 58.0%**

Current society favors the rich: 56.8%

Technology and foreign competition are squeezing people out of jobs: 55.6%

Too many people expect to have a good life handed to them: 54.3%

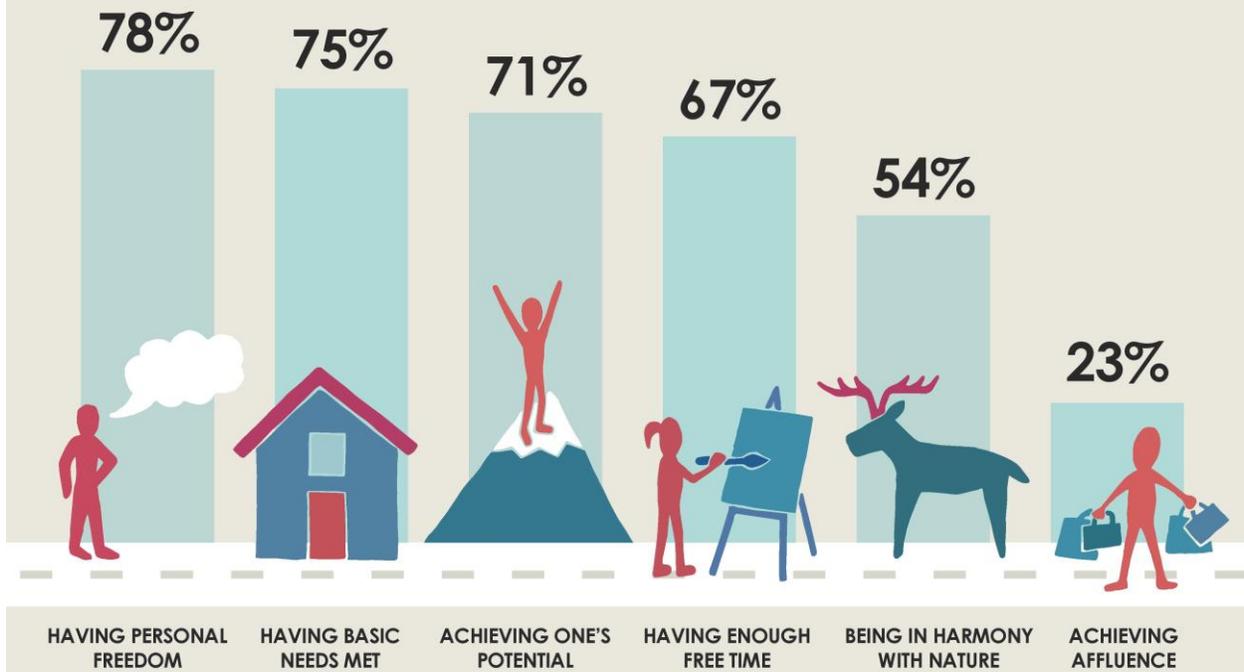
Advertising seduces us into buying things we don't really need: 40.7%

Americans have to work too much: 35.2%

Too many people lack patriotism: 29.4%

## What Americans Think of the American Dream

Percentage of Americans who consider the following very or extremely important in their vision of the American Dream:



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**2. Americans who have chosen to work fewer hours report an overall improvement in quality of life, indicating that it has positively affected their lives by allowing for more free time and reduced stress.**

In the past five years, more than a third of Americans have taken voluntary steps to reduce the number of hours they work and make less money:

**Yes, I have taken steps: 38.0%**  
No, I have not taken steps: 60.7%  
Don't know: 1.3%

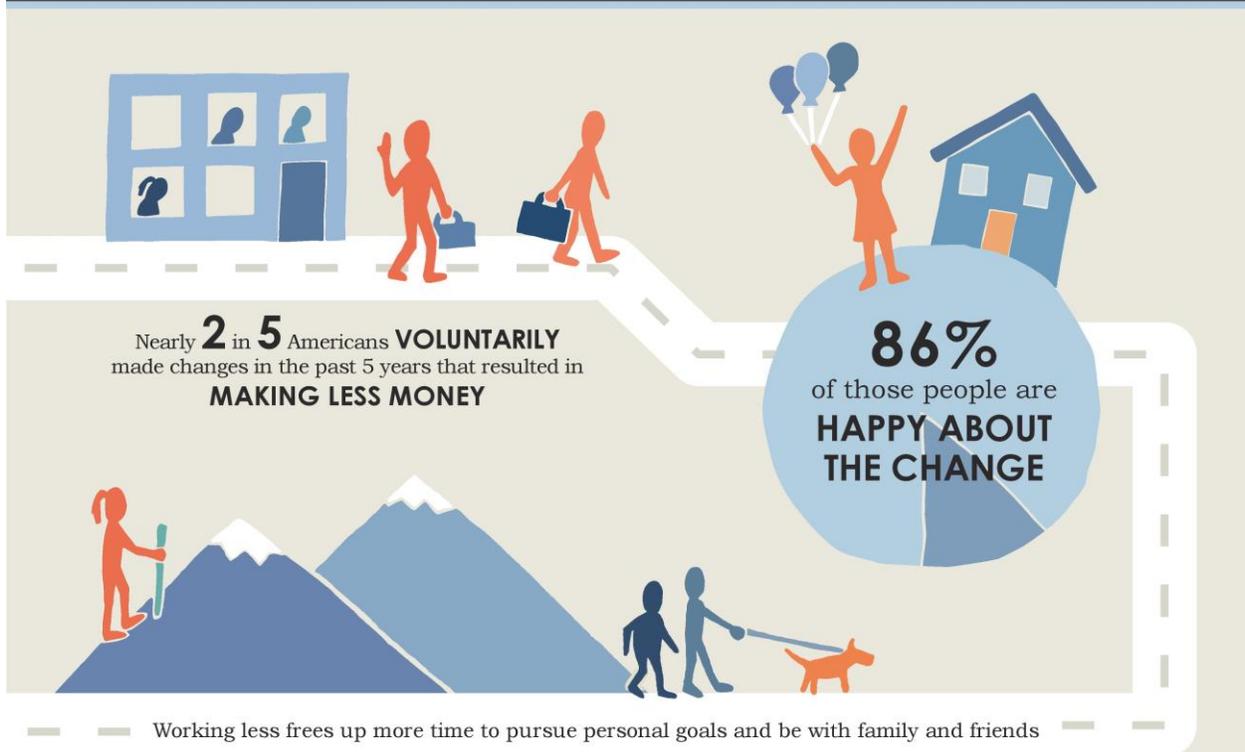
Specifically, those who took these voluntary steps did so in the following ways:

**Quit working outside the home: 39.3%**  
**Reduced work hours: 35.4%**  
**Changed to a lower paying job: 28.4%**  
Reduced the number of jobs you held: 19.8%  
Moved: 21.6%  
Other: 13.1%

Overwhelmingly, those Americans who have taken these steps feel positively about their action:

**I'm happy about the change and I don't miss the extra income much: 21.2%**  
**I'm happy about the change, but I miss the extra income: 39.2%**  
**Losing the income was a real hardship, but I'm still happy about the change: 25.9%**  
I'm unhappy about the change: 10.8%  
None of them, or Other: 2.5%

## What Americans Think of **Work & Money**



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**3. Americans are interested in increasing their sharing practices and learning more about the Sharing Economy. Over half of respondents believe that sharing lowers environmental impact, builds community, and helps save money.**

This survey is the first of its kind (nationally representative, census-balanced, telephone and internet survey) to address the topic of the Sharing Economy. While the movement is certainly still in its early stages, there appears to be a good deal of interest and support for its growth.

When asked if they would be interested in sharing more items, such as tools and household belongings, Americans:

**Strongly agree: 8.5%**

**Agree: 23.8%**

**Neutral: 37.2%**

Disagree 15.7

Strongly disagree 14.7

The majority of Americans can clearly see the benefits of the Sharing Economy, specifically in the realms of building community, saving money, and lowering environmental impact. The following percentages of Americans either “agree” or “strongly agree” with the following statements (format: “agree” | “strongly agree”):

**Sharing saves money: 48.4% | 28.0%**

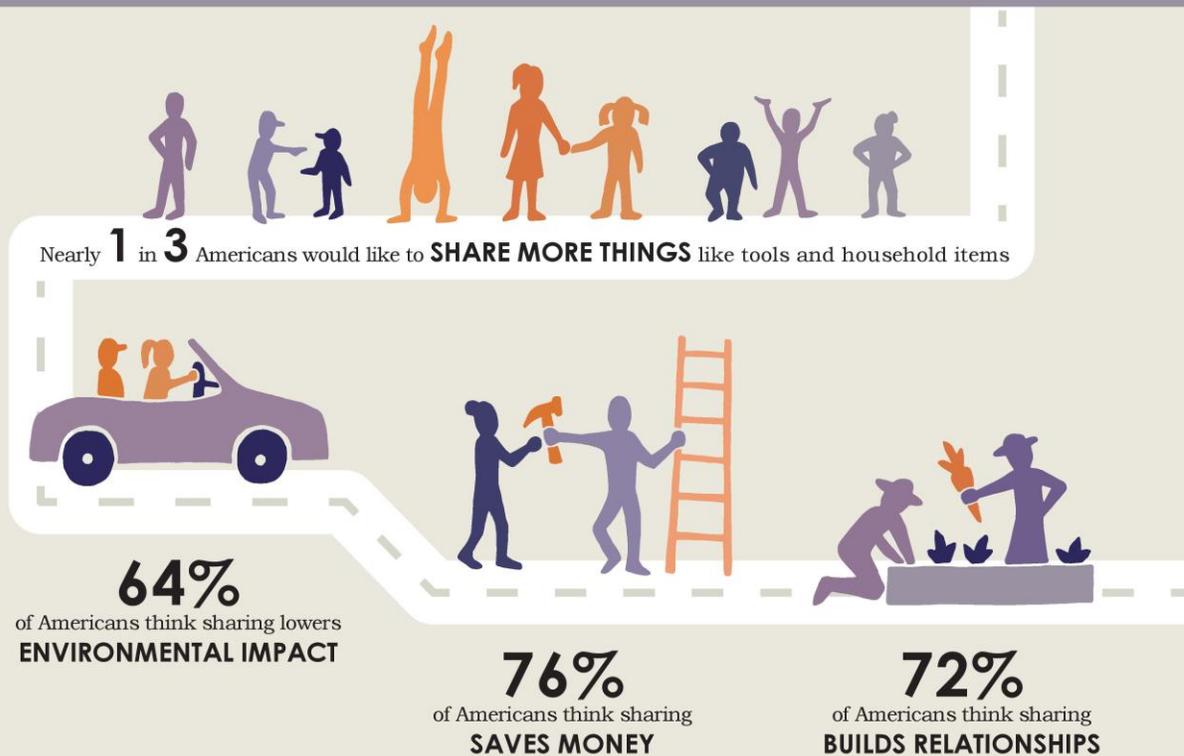
I don’t know people who I can share with: 21.5% | 11.3%

Sharing is inconvenient: 25.8% | 10.3%

**Sharing builds friendships and relationships: 45.7% | 26.2%**

**Sharing lowers environmental impacts: 42.8% | 21.3%**

## What Americans Think of the Sharing Economy



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**4. Americans feel strongly that the way we live produces too much waste, and that our high consumption levels are largely responsible for global environmental issues. An overwhelming majority feel that we will need to make major changes in the way we live to counterbalance this phenomenon.**

When asked whether the way we live produces too much waste, Americans firmly believe that to be true:

**Strongly Agree: 60%**  
**Somewhat Agree: 31%**  
Somewhat Disagree: 5%  
Strongly Disagree: 2.2%  
Don't Know: 1.8%

Americans agree that we focus too much on getting what we want now and not enough on the needs of future generations:

**Strongly Agree: 53.7%**  
**Somewhat Agree: 35%**  
Somewhat Disagree: 6.5%  
Strongly Disagree: 2.5%  
Don't Know: 2.2%

Americans believe that protecting the environment will require most of us to make major changes in the way we live:

**Strongly Agree: 44.5%**  
**Somewhat Agree: 40.1%**  
Somewhat Disagree: 9.3%  
Strongly Disagree: 4.5%  
Don't Know: 1.5%

When asked whether or not Americans are responsible for many of the world's environmental problems because we consume more resources and produce more waste compared to other countries, respondents agreed:

**Strongly Agree: 35%**  
**Somewhat Agree: 35.2%**  
Somewhat Disagree: 16.2%  
Strongly Disagree: 9.9%  
Don't Know: 3.7%

This is as compared to 2004:

**Strongly Agree: 30%**  
**Somewhat Agree: 34%**  
Somewhat Disagree: 17%  
Strongly Disagree: 13%  
Don't Know: 6%

## What Americans Think of **Environmental Issues**

Percentage of Americans who believe:



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**5. Commercialism and advertising have gotten out of hand in the United States, and Americans believe that the government should do more to combat it. Americans are specifically concerned about the impact of advertising on children. Almost 3/4 of Americans believe there should be limits on advertising to children, including limits on advertising in public spaces and in schools.**

When asked if there should be more limits on advertising to children, the results were a resounding yes:

**Yes: 71.6%**

No: 16.5%

Don't know: 11.9%

When asked about specific scenarios, Americans responded definitively that major steps should be taken to curtail advertising to children. When asked if they would support a 1% tax on all broadcast advertising, with revenue dedicated to K-12 education:

**34.3% of Americans said they strongly supported this step.**

33.8% of Americans said they leaned towards supporting this step.

When asked if they would support prohibition of advertising on children's television programs and websites:

**27.7% of Americans said they strongly supported this step.**

29% of Americans said they leaned towards supporting this step.

When asked if they would support prohibition of advertising in or on public property like parks and public transportation:

**24.2% of Americans said they strongly supported this step.**

28.3% of Americans said they leaned towards supporting this step.

When asked if they would support prohibition on advertising in schools and textbooks:

**43.6% of Americans said they strongly supported this step.**

33.4% of Americans said they leaned towards supporting this step.

## What Americans Think of Advertising

Percentage of Americans who support:



Prohibitions on advertising in  
**PARKS & PUBLIC SPACES**

More limits on  
**ADVERTISING TO KIDS**



Bans on advertising in **SCHOOLS, TEXTBOOKS, & SCHOOL BUSES**

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**6. Millennials make use of sharing economy services—such as bike sharing and peer-to-peer lodging—at a rate more than double their Baby Boomer and Gen X peers, and are interested in expanding their sharing practices. Millennials are also more optimistic than Baby Boomers and Gen Xers that they will be able to achieve the American Dream.**

Percentage of Americans who are not currently using bike sharing services, but are interested in learning more:

**18-24: 23.9%**  
**25-34: 25.1%**  
35-54: 22.1%  
55-64: 17.1%

Percentage of Americans using bike sharing services:

**18-24: 18.0%**  
25-34: 8.4%  
35-54: 8.8%  
55-64: 4.9%

Percentage of Americans who are not currently using peer-to-peer lodging services, but are interested in learning more:

**18-24: 21.7%**  
25-34: 21.6%  
35-54: 15.9%  
55-64: 12.2%

Percentage of Americans using peer-to-peer lodging services:

**18-24: 23.1%**  
25-34: 11.6%  
35-54: 8.2%  
55-64: 5.9%

When asked if it would possible to achieve the American Dream in their lifetime, Millennials are far more optimistic than their Gen X or Baby Boomer counterparts, in spite of entering the workforce during an economic recession:

**18-24: 54.1%**  
**25-34: 46.8%**  
35-54: 42%  
55-64: 39.9%

## **7. Non-white Americans are more interested in sharing practices more than white Americans.**

When asked if they would be interested in sharing more items, such as tools and household belongings, non-white Americans were more engaged with and interested in sharing practices than white Americans (format: “agree” | “strongly agree”):

**Asian: 33% | 8.5%**

**African-American/Black: 22% | 15.6%**

**Hispanic/Latino: 28.2% | 6.8%**

White: 23.9% | 7.5%

**Other: 13.9% | 17.7%**