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Millions of Americans Play Bridge ...and Millions More Want to Learn

Horn Lake, MS. September 19, 2019 About 15 million Americans age 45+ (and over) know how to play bridge, and about 5 million of them play at least a few times year. About 2 million of those play at least once a month.

Among those who don't know how to play, one out of five said they are interested in learning – a whopping 11 million people.

These conclusions are based on a survey conducted by the ACBL Educational Foundation, using a SurveyMonkey audience panel of 2,550 respondents, representing 70 million Americans who are at least 45 and have some college.

Social or rubber bridge is the most popular form for players, followed by playing with robots, online play with a partner, non-sanctioned duplicate, and then duplicate games sanctioned by the American Contract Bridge League, which has about 165,000 members.

After four decades in which the number of new players declined from the previous decade, there has been a substantial uptick in this decade, with more than 2.2 million new players in this age group since 2010.

Among those who said they don't know how to play bridge, one out of every five said they were interested in learning. That represents more than 11 million prospective learners. Asked to list all the ways they were open to learning, 55% said from an app or a computer program, 35% from a teacher, 30% from a video, and 15% from books.

Non-players who know people who play are 50% more likely to want to learn the game than non-players who are familiar with the game but don't know anyone who plays.

The survey was conducted by Robert Todd, vice-president of the ACBL Educational Foundation and chair of its newly formed program committee. Todd said that “the Foundation surveyed this population first because we are confident that the vast majority of bridge players are in this demographic category, and therefore we could capture a good-sized sample of players at a reasonable cost. “

He added that the Foundation will soon begin surveying younger players, to understand their bridge behaviors and preferences, as well as younger non-players, to gauge their openness to learning the game.

Joel Kramer, newly elected president of the Foundation’s board, said, “It is exciting to contemplate how many millions of Americans play this game regularly and how many more know how to play. There is a great opportunity to engage these people more deeply in the game, and this is a top priority of the ACBL Educational Foundation. In addition, there are millions more interested in learning, and starting them on the path to enjoying bridge is our other top goal. The high interest in learning if you know someone who plays suggests that current bridge players can be great ambassadors for the game.”

The full survey is available at **acblef.org/survey**

The ACBL Educational Foundation is an independent 501(c)(3) nonprofit that makes grants to pursue its mission, and partners with the ACBL and others. To learn more about the Foundation, contact executive director Kristen Frederick at Kristen@acbleducationalfoundation.org

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