

## How Church and Marriage Help Children’s Behavior\*

*“Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.” Ephesians 6:4*

**Throughout life, the presence of an intact family and a religious community offers a safety net to those of every age, encouraging them to respect other people and their property. Social science research shows that:**

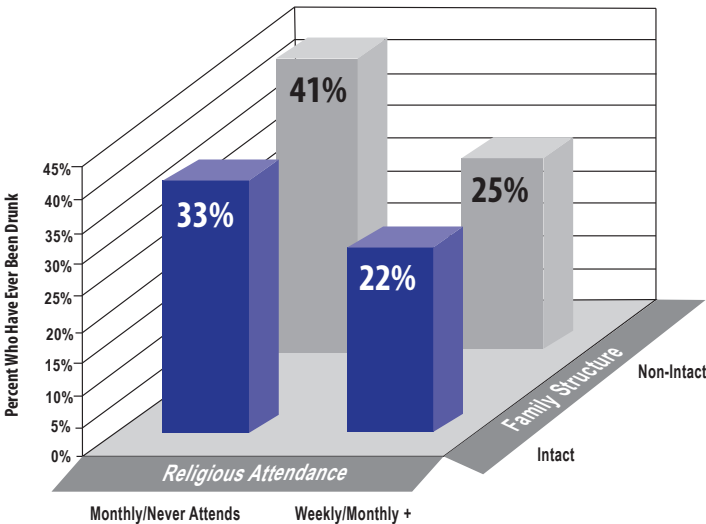
- Children from intact families who frequently worship God have greater self-control and interpersonal skills, are less likely to feel sad or lonely, and are less likely to cause trouble at school.
- Adolescents from intact families who worship frequently are half as likely to steal as those in non-intact families who worship less than monthly.

**The effects of family and regular worship endure after children grow up.**

- Adults who frequently attended religious services as adolescents and who grew up living with both biological parents are the least likely to have ever been charged with a crime by police.

**Percentage of Teens Who Haven Been Drunk in the Past  
 by Religious Attendance and Family Structure, Adolescents Grade 7-12**

Source: Adolescent Health Survey, Wave 1, Adolescents Grade 7-12



This chart shows the significantly lower rates of problem behavior (such as drunkenness) among children of married and worshipping parents. Parents who want their children to avoid risky behavior should remain married and attend church regularly. All other “solutions” to child and adolescent mal-behavior pale in comparison.

For links to the research behind these statements, please visit [www.marri.us/one-pagers/](http://www.marri.us/one-pagers/)

\*It bears emphasizing that these patterns hold for the groups involved, not for all the individuals who make up each group. There is naturally a wide variation among individuals.

# THE SOCIAL SCIENCES

ILLUSTRATING THE WAY GOD MADE MAN



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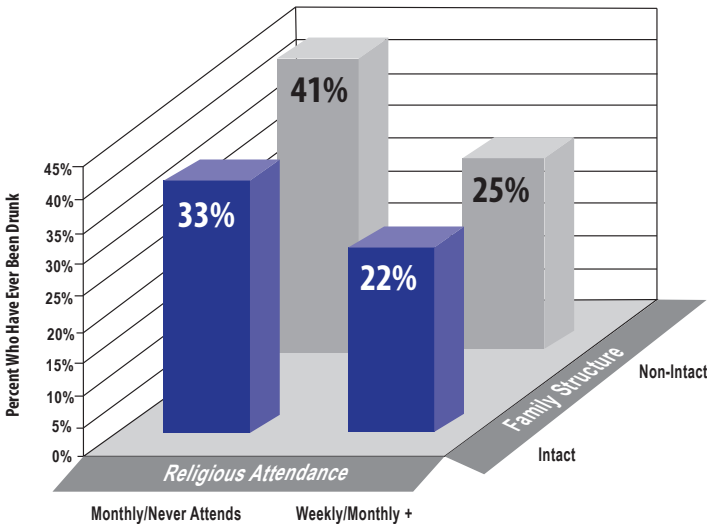
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