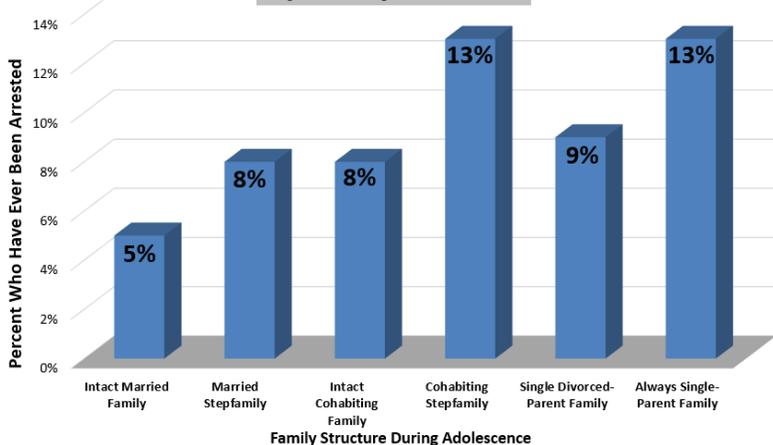


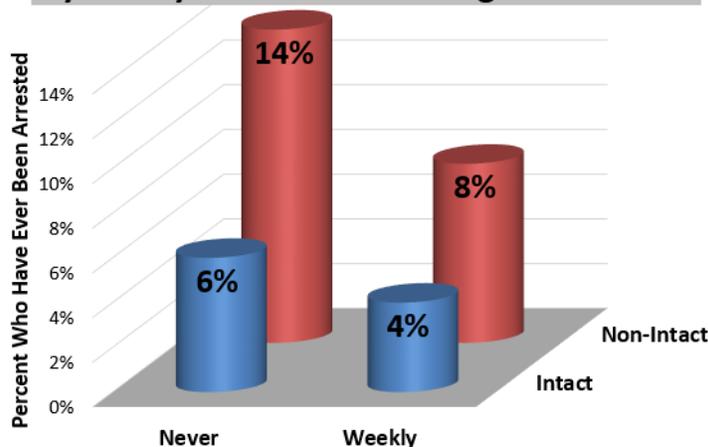
Arrests Among Adolescents By Family Structure and Religious Practice

Arrests Among Adolescence
By Family Structure



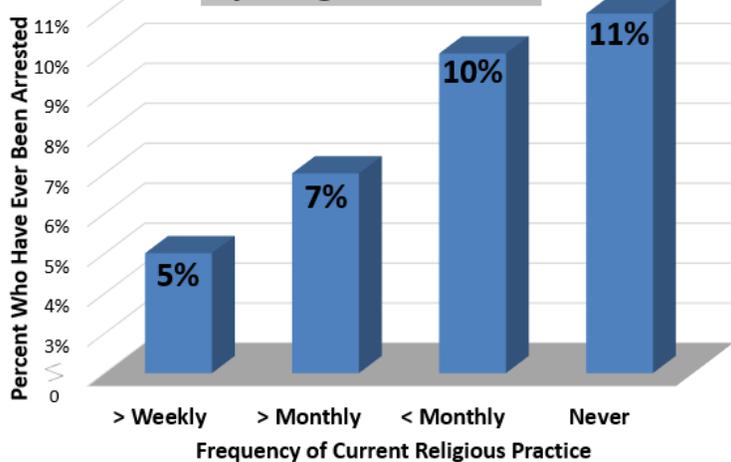
Source: National Longitudinal Survey of Youth

Arrests Among Adolescence
By Family Structure and Religious Practice



Source: National Longitudinal Survey of Youth

Arrests Among Adolescence
By Religious Practice



Source: National Longitudinal Survey of Youth

This chart looks at youths who have ever been arrested at the extremes of four demographic quadrants.

These four quadrants are derived from combining two sets of family structures (always-intact vs. all other family structures*) and two sets of religious attendance (weekly vs. never).

The families occupying the four corners (or four extremes) of these quadrants are:

- The always-intact married family that worships weekly;
- The always-intact married family that never worships;
- All other family structures* that worship weekly;
- All other family structures* that never worship.

(*The non-intact group consists of individuals in the following categories: married stepfamily, cohabiting stepfamily, single divorced parent, and always single parent. In all these structures, there has been rejection between the biological father and mother, and thus the original pairing is no longer intact.)

Arrests Among Adolescents by Family Structure and Religious Practice

The 1997 National Longitudinal Survey of Youth shows that youths who did not grow up in always-intact married families and never attended church were most likely to have “ever been arrested”.

Family Structure: Only 5 percent of youths who grew up in an intact married family had ever been arrested, followed by youths from married stepfamilies and families with intact cohabiting partners (8 percent), single divorced parent families (9 percent) and cohabiting stepfamilies and always single parent families (13 percent).

Religious Practice: Five percent of youths who attended weekly religious services at the time of the survey had ever been arrested, followed by those who attended one to three times a month (7 percent), those who attended less than once a month (10 percent), and those who never attended church (11 percent).

Family Structure and Religious Practice Combined: Only 4 percent of youths who attended weekly religious services at the time of the survey and who grew up in an always-intact family had ever been arrested, followed by youths who never attended church but grew up in an always intact family (6 percent), those who grew up in all other family structures but attended church weekly (8 percent) and those who never attended church and grew up in all other family structures (14 percent).

Related Insights from Other Studies: The effects of family structure can be seen in the Oregon Youth Study, a longitudinal survey. Compared to boys living with both biological parents, boys living in single-mother households had higher odds of being arrested by age 14 (208 percent higher) and of being arrested by age 17 (128 percent higher). This survey also showed that boys living in stepfamilies had greater odds of being arrested by age 14 (210 percent higher) and of being arrested by age 17 (139 percent higher) than did boys in households with both biological parents.¹

Patrick F. Fagan, Ph.D.

Patrick Fagan is the Director of the Marriage and Religion Research Institute

Scott Talkington, Ph.D.

Scott Talkington has been Research Director for the National Association of Scholars and Senior Research Fellow at George Mason University School of Public Policy since 1998.

¹ Coughlin, Chris and Samuel Vuchinich, "Family Experience in Preadolescence and the Development of Male Delinquency," *Journal of Marriage and the Family* 58(2) 1996, pp. 491-501.