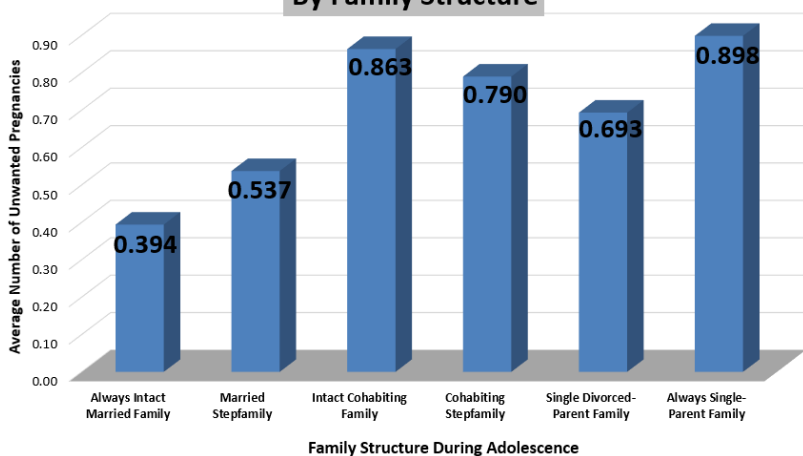


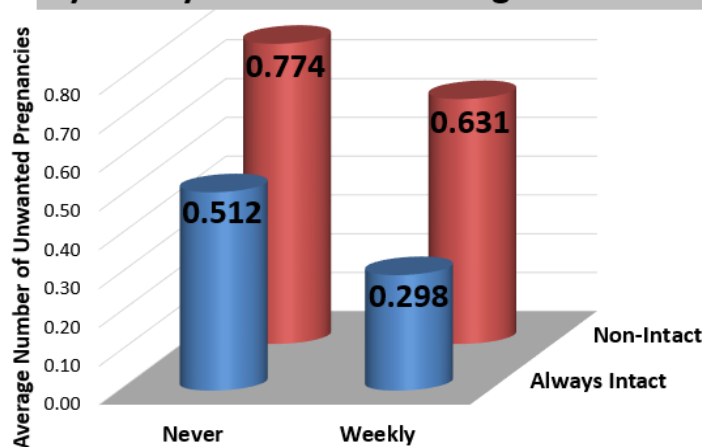
## “Average Number of Unwanted Pregnancies” By Family Structure and Religious Practice

“Average Number of Unwanted Pregnancies”  
By Family Structure



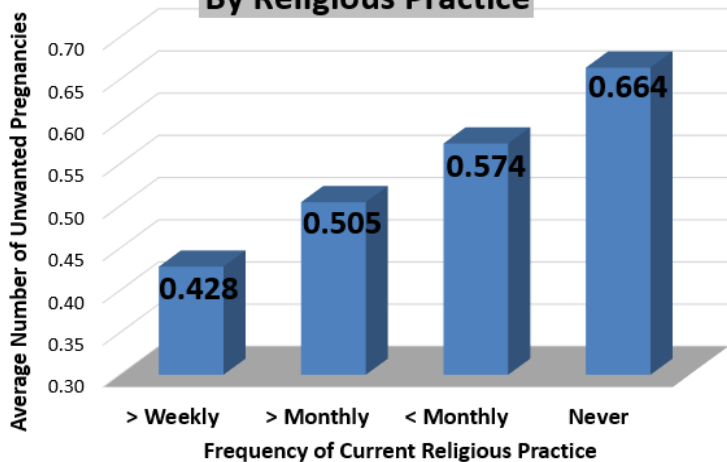
Source: National Survey of Family Growth, Cycle 6 (2002)

“Average Number of Unwanted Pregnancies”  
By Family Structure and Religious Practice



Source: National Survey of Family Growth, Cycle 6 (2002)

“Average Number of Unwanted Pregnancies”  
By Religious Practice



Source: National Survey of Family Growth, Cycle 6 (2002)

*This chart looks at women who have had an unwanted pregnancy in their lifetime at the extremes of four demographic quadrants.*

*These four quadrants are derived from combining two sets of family structures (always-intact vs. non-intact\*) and two sets of religious attendance (high vs. low).*

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

*Women who grew up in an always-intact married family and who now worship weekly;*

*Women who grew up in an always-intact married family and who now never worship;*

*Women who grew up in a non-intact family\* and who now worship weekly;*

*Women who grew up in a non-intact family\* and who now never worship.*

*(\* The non-intact group consists of women who grew up 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.)*

## “Average Number of Unwanted Pregnancies” by Family Structure and Religious Practice<sup>1</sup>

**Family Structure:** According to the National Survey of Family Growth, women who grew up in an intact married family had an average of 0.39 unwanted pregnancies in their lifetime, followed by women from married stepfamilies (0.54), single divorced parent families (0.69), cohabiting stepfamilies (0.79), intact cohabiting families (0.86), and always single parent families (0.9).

**Religious Practice:** The National Survey of Family Growth shows that women who worshipped at least weekly at the time of the survey had an average of 0.43 unwanted pregnancies in their lifetime, followed by women who attended religious services between one and three times a month (0.50), those who attended religious services less than once a month (0.57), and those who never attended religious services (0.66).

**Family Structure and Religious Practice Combined:** The number of unwanted pregnancies was lowest for women who grew up in an intact married family and who worshipped at least weekly at the time of the survey. According to the National Survey of Family Growth, women who grew up in an intact married family and worshipped at least weekly had an average of 0.3 unwanted pregnancies in their lifetimes, followed by women who grew up in an intact married family and never worshipped (0.51), those who grew up in other family structures and worshipped at least weekly (0.63), and those who grew up in other family structures and never worshipped (0.77).

**Related Insights from Other Studies:** Several other studies corroborate the direction of these findings. James Nonnemaker of Research Triangle Institute and colleagues found a positive association between adolescent public religiosity and a lower likelihood of pregnancy.<sup>2</sup>

Scott South of the State University of New York at Albany also found that “growing up in a family headed by a single mother increases the risk of a premarital birth.”<sup>3</sup>

In a study of black adolescent females in high-poverty neighborhoods, Mignon Moore of Columbia University and P. Lindsay Chase-Lansdale of Northwestern University reported that “[l]iving in married households is associated with a reduced risk of pregnancy” and that “teenagers in single-mother families have higher odds of experiencing” pregnancy, though

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<sup>1</sup> These charts draw on data collected by the National Survey of Family Growth, Cycle 6 (2002). The sample consists of women between the ages of 14 and 44 and numbers 7,643.

<sup>2</sup> James M. Nonnemaker, Clea A. McNeely, and Robert Wm. Blum, “Public and Private Domains of Religiosity and Adolescent Health Risk Behaviors: Evidence from the National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent Health,” *Social Science & Medicine* 57 (2003): 2049-54.

<sup>3</sup> Scott J. South, “Historical Changes and Life Course Variation in the Determinants of Premarital Childbearing,” *Journal of Marriage and Family* 61 (1999): 752-63.

“adolescents in cohabiting households were not found to have...significantly higher odds of pregnancy.”<sup>4</sup>

As the evidence shows, women who grew up in an intact married family and who now worship weekly are likely to have fewer unwanted pregnancies in their lifetimes.

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<sup>4</sup> Mignon R. Moore and P. Lindsay Chase-Lansdale, “Sexual Intercourse and Pregnancy among African American Girls in High-Poverty Neighborhoods: The Role of Family and Perceived Community Environment,” *Journal of Marriage and Family* 63 (2001): 1146-57.