

## Religious Involvement and Health\*

*"My son, be attentive to my words; incline your ear to my sayings. Let them not escape from your sight; keep them within your heart. For they are life to those who find them, and healing to all their flesh."  
 Proverbs 4:20-22*

**Social science research details numerous health benefits that are associated with regular worship:**

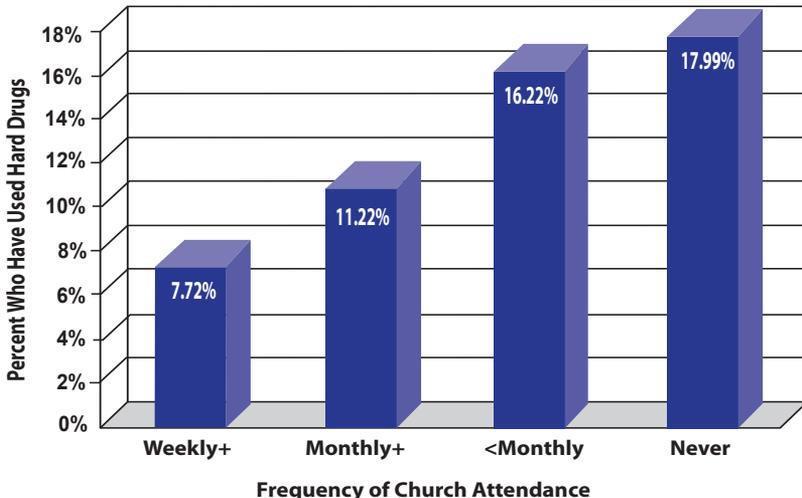
- Those who are religiously involved live an average of seven years longer than those who are not.
- Religious practice generally increases one's lifespan. One aspect of worship is the support network it engenders among family and friends that builds a community that cares.
- Young people who attend services weekly and rate religion as important in their lives are more likely to follow a healthy lifestyle (adequate diet, sleep, and exercise).
- Such young people are also less likely to engage in risky behavior (such as driving without a seatbelt or driving drunk), to smoke (tobacco or marijuana), or to drink heavily.

**Given the tremendous benefits of regular religious practice, is there a spiritual discipline—prayer, meditation, or Bible reading—that you can adopt? Can you help another do the same?**

The following chart shows that teens who attend church are less likely to use hard drugs. Weekly church attendance fosters good habits and morals in children and teens.

### Hard Drugs / Church Attendance

Source: Adolescent Health Survey, Wave I. Adolescents grade 7-12



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

\*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.



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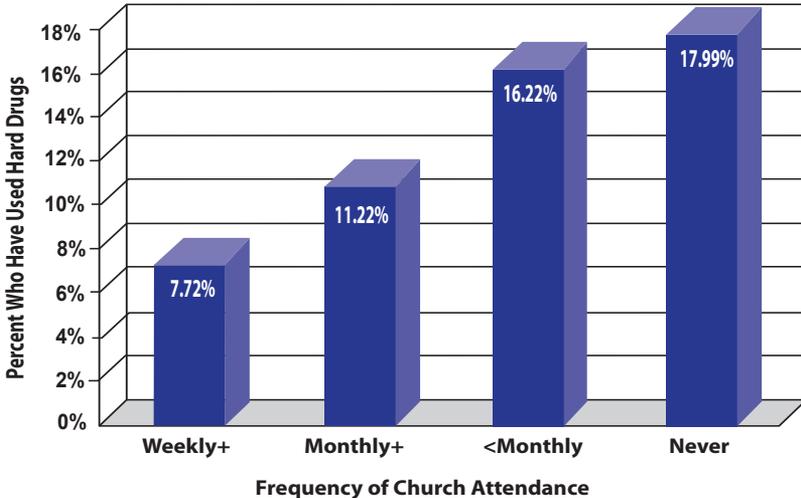
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