This chart looks at students’ Peabody Individual Achievement Test (math) percentile score norms 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.)
“Peabody Individual Achievement Test (Math) Percentile Score Norms”

The 1997 National Longitudinal Survey of Youth shows that students who grew up in an intact married family and currently worship at least weekly have higher math scores on the Peabody Individual Achievement Test, an academic aptitude test administered to students in grades K-12.

**Description:** Examining only **structure of family of origin**, students from married, always-intact families score in the 54th percentile on the math section of the PIAT. Students from married stepfamilies score in the 44th percentile, and students from divorced, single-parent families score in the 42nd percentile. Thereafter, scores experience a steep drop-off: students in intact cohabiting families score in the 32nd percentile, and students in cohabiting stepfamilies and in always-single parent families score in the 27th percentile.

Examining only **current religious attendance**, students who attend religious services at least weekly score in the 50th percentile on the math section of the PIAT. Students who attend at least monthly score in the 48th percentile, students who attend less than monthly score in the 44th percentile, and students who never attend score in the 41st percentile.

Examining **current religious attendance and structure of family of origin combined**, students from always-intact married families who attend religious services at least weekly score in the 56th percentile on the math section of the PIAT. Students from always-intact married families who never attend religious services score in the 51st percentile. Students from all other family structures have drastically lower scores: students from all other family structures who attend religious services at least weekly score in the 39th percentile, and students from all other family structures who never attend religious services score in the 37th percentile.

**Related Insight from Other Studies**

A study by Professor William H. Jeynes of California State University, Long Beach, found that “the influence of parental involvement overall [was] significant for secondary school children. Parental involvement as a whole affect[ed] all the academic variables under study.” The academic variables included in the study were standardized tests, grades, teacher ratings, “academic attitudes and behaviors,” and a general measure for academic achievement. Parental involvement affected both white and minority children. 1

Furthermore, a study of rural adolescents found that students who reported greater religious attendance had higher grades. 2

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