

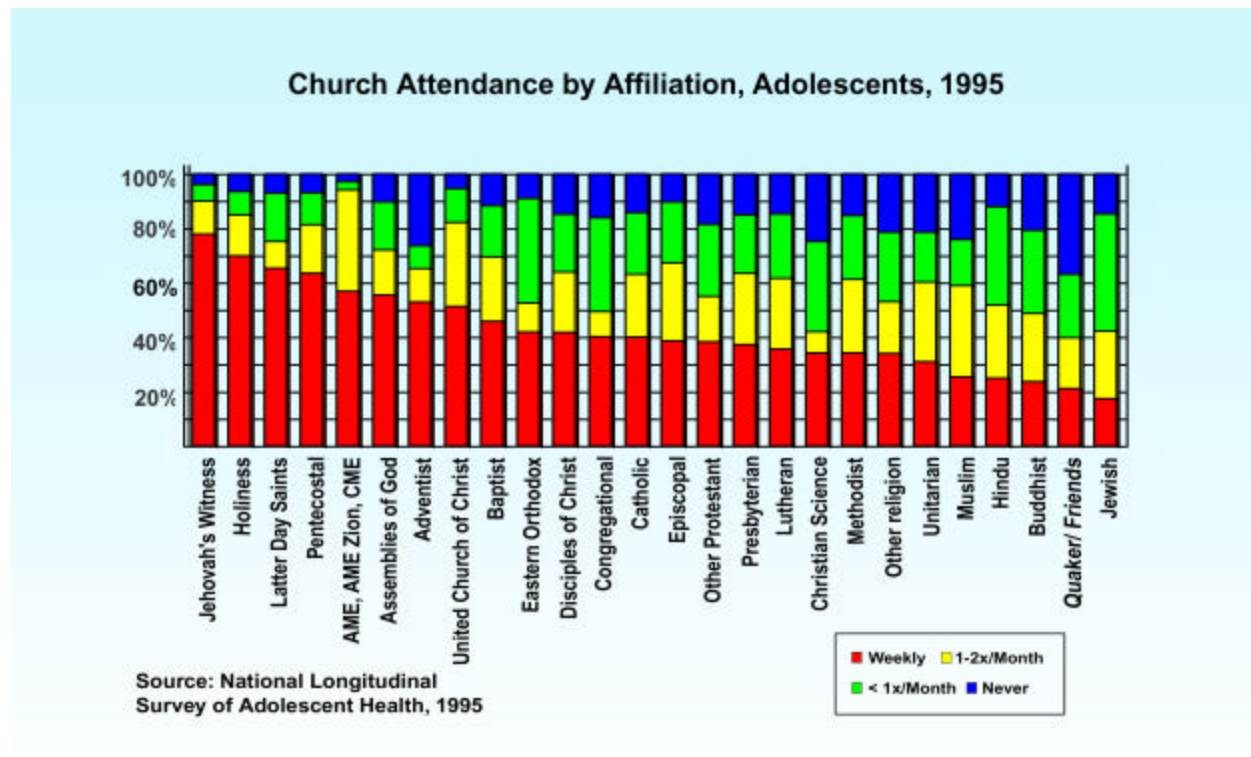
How Often Are Teens Attending Church?

More than half of all American teens who in 1995 were in 7th through 12th grade attended church at least monthly, with 38 percent attending every week.

But church attendance clearly varied by religious affiliation. More conservative groups, and those with larger proportions of African-Americans — such as Jehovah’s Witnesses, Holiness denominations, Mormons, Pentecostals, African Methodist Episcopal (AME), Assemblies of God, and Adventists — had the highest rates of attendance. In each of these denominations, more than 50 percent of their young people attended services weekly.

These percentages, taken from the 1995 National Longitudinal Survey of Adolescent Health, also indicate that 40 percent of Catholic youth attended weekly. Youth in mainline religious groups for the most part exhibited moderate amounts of church attendance.

Only 17 percent of Jewish youth attended synagogue each week. Youth in other minority religious groups — Quakers, Buddhist, Hindu, Muslim, Unitarian, Christian Science, and “other” religions — also evidenced relatively low weekly attendance levels.



This preliminary analysis is designed to provide baseline information that will aid in the development of a comprehensive survey of adolescents for the National Study of Youth and Religion, a four-year research project being conducted at the

University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill under the direction of Dr. Christian Smith. Funded by Lilly Endowment, Inc., this project is designed to enhance our understanding of the religious and spiritual lives of American adolescents.

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The National Longitudinal Survey of Adolescent Health is a nationally representative school-based study of adolescents focusing on the social context of healthy behavior. Eighty eligible high schools —both public and private—were drawn from a national sampling frame of high schools. The recruitment rate of the originally sampled high schools was over 70 percent. The Add Health survey was administered in school, from the Fall of 1994 to the Spring of 1995, to all students grades 7 to 12 present on the survey date, and was completed by over 90,000 students. Note that Add Health data do not include school dropouts and home-schooled youth.