

FAMILY

(Josh McDowell research 2006 to Present)

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(Gary Foster, “Fast Facts,” *Religious Market Update*, February 10, 2009, p3; www.garydfoster.com)

“CASA STUDY: THE IMPORTANCE OF FAMILY DINNERS V”

“We have discovered that one of the most effective ways parents can keep their kids from using substances is by sitting down to dinner with them. Compared to teens who have frequent family dinners (five to seven per week), those who have infrequent family dinners (fewer than three per week) are:”

- “twice as likely to use tobacco or marijuana; and”
- “more than one and a half times likelier to use alcohol.”

“The research shows clearly how important it is to get to the dinner table with your kids. And it is also important for parents to give kids their undivided attention--and to get theirs.”

“Teens who have infrequent dinners are likelier to say people at the table are talking or texting on cell phones or using other devices at the table such as Blackberries, laptops or Game Boys. Teens in households where dinners are infrequent and such distractions are present at the table are:”

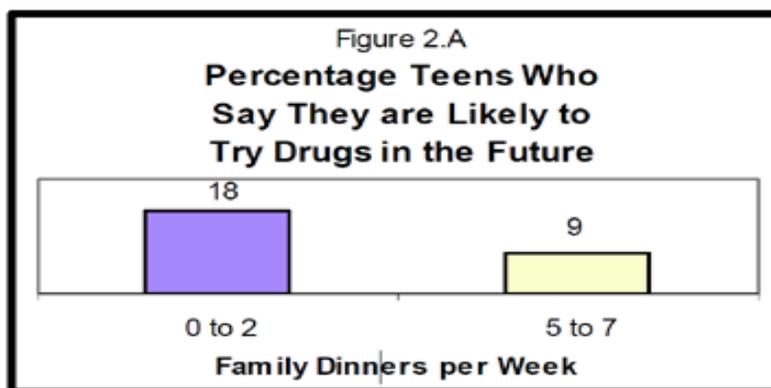
- “three times likelier to use marijuana and tobacco; and”
- “two and a half times likelier to use alcohol.”

“Compared to teens who have frequent family dinners (five to seven family dinners per week), those who have infrequent family dinners (fewer than three per week) are twice as likely to have used tobacco or marijuana, and more than one and a half times likelier to have used alcohol. (Table 2.1)”

Table 2.1 Percentage Teens Who Have Tried...		
	0 to 2 dinners/week	5 to 7 dinners/week
Alcohol	44%	25%
Tobacco	20%	10%
Marijuana	25%	12%

The Relationship Between Family Dinners and the Likelihood of Future Substance Use

“Compared to teens who have five to seven family dinners per week, those who have fewer than three family dinners per week are twice as likely to say they expect to try drugs in the future. (Figure 2.A)”



“Parents who have dinner with their kids fewer than three nights per week are twice as likely to say their child is likely to use drugs in the future, compared to parents who have five or more dinners with their kids each week.”

“Family Dinners and the Quality of Teens’ Relationships with Mom and Dad”

“Teens who report having excellent relationships with their parents are less likely to use substances.”

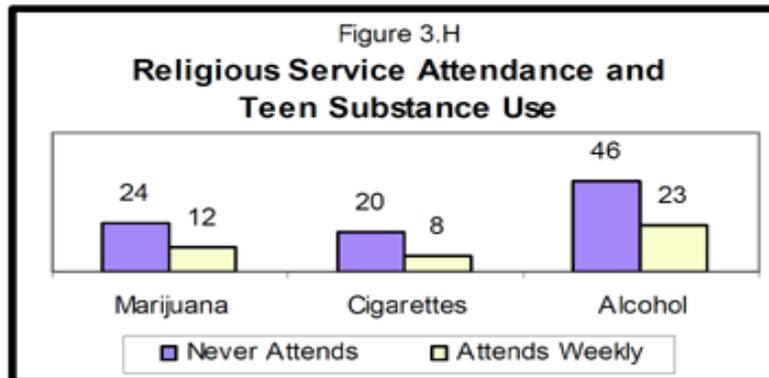
“Teens who have frequent family dinners (five to seven family dinners per week) are likelier to say they have excellent relationships with their parents, and teens who have infrequent family dinners (fewer than three per week) are likelier to say they have fair or poor relationships with their parents.”

“Compared to teens who have five to seven family dinners per week, those who have fewer than three family dinners per week are five times likelier to say they have a fair or poor relationship with their

mother, and they're almost four times likelier to say they have a fair or poor relationship with their father.

(Figures 3.C and 3.D)”

“Compared to teens who attend religious services at least weekly, those who never attend services are more than twice as likely to have tried cigarettes, and twice as likely to have tried marijuana and alcohol. (Figure 3.H)”



“The Importance of Family Dinners V,” CASA, September 2009;
(<http://casafamilyday.org/familyday/files/media/Importance%20of%20Family%20Dinners%20V%20-18-09.pdf>).

“FAMILIES DECIDE DIFFERENTLY”

“Families today not only look but operate differently than they did in the past; they have taken a very different approach to decision-making. While 39% of moms surveyed said ‘parents made decisions entirely on their own’ in the family in which they grew up, 44% report that in their family today ‘parents make the ultimate decision but actively seek their kids’ input.’ Dads today are also far more involved in family decision-making. What does this mean for today’s marketers? (1) It means cohort decision marketing (i.e., marketing to kids *or* marketing to moms), as we know it, is dead. (2) Brands and businesses that will succeed must understand and develop products and messages that fit with families’ new decision-making paradigm. (3) Brands that really understand the decision-making style in play for their category will have the tools they need to better meet their consumers’ needs.” (*Engage* 7/27/09)

(Gary Foster, "Families Decide Differently," *Religious Market Update*, August 25, 2009, p1; www.garydfoster.com)

"WE'RE LOSING KIDS WHO CRAVE CONNECTIONS"

"First, they need strong, stable bonds with family and adults in the larger community. Second, they need a vision of life that offers meaning and purpose."

"The family plays a vital role in moral development. An infant's attachment to its mother and father is biologically based and lays the foundation for future moral development, according to the report. Children deprived of stable, loving maternal bonds may exhibit symptoms ranging from 'poverty, of feeling for others' to a tendency towards deceitfulness and theft."

"Fathers also profoundly influence their offspring's' development. For example, for girls, living with their biological father tends to slow the onset of puberty, while living with an unrelated adult male – such as a mother's boyfriend – tends to speed its onset."

"Human beings' second 'hard-wired' need for connection is a 'built-in capacity and drive' to 'reflect on life's ultimate ends.' Children seem biologically primed to ask 'Why am I here?' and "What should I do with my life?"

"The report puts it this way: 'Me first. Instant gratification. What have you done for me lately? These are...slogans of a social environment in which all connections to others, even including marriages, are increasingly viewed as contingent, nonpermanent and prospectively short term.'"

"The most important of these is the family. If we are serious about saving our children, we will start there."

(Katherine Kersten, "We're Losing Kids Who Crave Connections," *Star Tribune*, December 13, 2008, <http://www.startribune.com/.ocal/36092464.html>)

-“A DOWNSIDE TO DAY CARE?”

Newsweek – March 26, 2007

"A new study, published in the March/April 2007 issue of *Child Development*, has concluded that kids who spend more than two years regularly attending day-care centers show slightly more behavioral problems in kindergarten through sixth grade than those that do not. *Are There Long-Term Effects of Early Child Care?* Is drawn from data collected by the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development's Study of Early Child Care and Youth Development, which includes 1,364 children at 10 sites around the country who have been tracked since birth (and are now aged between 15 and 16). Newsweek's Julie Scelfo spoke with Margaret Burchinal, a psychologist at the University of North Carolina and a co-author of the study about what these findings mean for parents of young children."

"The more time in day care, the more likely these kids showed problem behaviors."

“And you found that kids who never go to day care are the most well-behaved? Yes, they show the fewest problem behaviors.”

“How did children with nannies fare? We saw no relationship between the amount of child care—whether by a nanny, a family member, or a babysitter—to how the child behaved in kindergarten through 6th grade. Interestingly, we also found that staying home with mom was statistically neither an asset nor a detriment in terms of academic outcomes and behaviors.”

“But your findings say high-quality parenting is an even better predictor of a child’s behavior and academic performance than their child-care setting. What makes parenting high quality? The degree to which parents enjoy being with children, are responsive and sensitive to children, talk to their children, and expose their children to ideas is the strongest predictor of children’s academic success as well as their behavior at school.”

“Parenting matters far more than any single decision about child care—or all the decision put together. Quality parenting predicts school success.”

(“A Downside to Daycare,” Newsweek, March 2007)

“ACTIVE FATHER FIGURES”

“Active Father Figures play a key role in reducing behavior problems in boys and psychological problems in young women, according to the peer-reviewed journal Acta Paediatrica. Swedish researchers found regular positive contact reduces criminal behavior among children in low-income families and enhances cognitive skills such as intelligence, reasoning and language development. Children who lived with both a mother and father figure also had less behavioral problems than those who just lived with their mother.” (lifesitenews.com 2/13/08)

(Gary D. Foster, “Religious Market Update,” The FOSTER Letter, 10 March 2008)

“AMERICANS HAVE COMPLEX RELATIONSHIP WITH MARRIAGE”

“Gallup trends show that the percentage of American adults who were married at the time of the survey has fallen from a high of 77% in the 1960s to an average of 53% since 2000. Simultaneously, the percentage of divorced Americans at the time of the survey has grown from 3% to 11%, and the percentage either single or living together has surged from 9% to 24%”

(Lydia Saad, “Americans Have Complex Relationship With Marriage,” The Gallup Poll, June 2006, www.poll.gallup.com/content/default.aspx?ci=23041&VERSION=p)

“CHILDREN @ RISK”

“Compared to children of married biological parents, children age 12-17 with cohabiting parents are 6 times more likely to exhibit emotional and behavioral problems. Likewise, adolescents from cohabiting households are 122% more likely to be expelled from school and 90% more likely to have a low GPA.” (New Oxford Review 9/07)

“Children @ Risk, from The Foster Letter – Religious Market Update, October 25, 2007, p2, www.GaryDFoster.com)

“CORRELATIONS BETWEEN FAMILY MEALS AND PSYCHOSOCIAL WELL-BEING AMONG ADOLESCENTS”

“Results: Approximately one quarter (26.8%) of respondents ate 7 or more family

“Results: Approximately one quarter (26.8%) of respondents ate 7 or more family meals in the past week, and approximately one quarter (23.1%) ate family meals 2 times or less. Frequency of family meals was inversely associated with tobacco, alcohol, and marijuana use; low grade point average; depressive symptoms; and suicide involvement after controlling for family connectedness (odds ratios, 0.76-0.93).”

“Conclusion: Findings suggest that eating family meals may enhance the health and well-being of adolescents.”

“The importance of the family as a key component of healthy adolescent development has been clearly demonstrated by research. Eating meals together is one aspect of family life that has been demonstrated to benefit young people. Family meals offer routine and consistency and provide an opportunity to socialize children and teach them about communication skills, manner, nutrition, and good eating habits.”

“Family connection has been consistently related to healthy youth development and a reduced risk for emotional distress, substance use, violence involvement, unhealthy weight control, and sexual behaviors.”

(Maral E. Eisenberg, ScD, MPH; Rachel E. Olson, MS; Dianne Neumark-Sztainer, PhD, MPH, RD; Mary Story, PhD, RD; Linda H. Bearinger, PhD, MS, “Correlations Between Family Meals and Psychosocial Well-being Among Adolescents,” American Medical Association, June 2006)

“DELAYING MARRIAGE”

“U.S. Census estimates show that for the first time, unmarried adults represented...”

“U.S. Census estimates show that for the first time, unmarried adults represented more than half of American households. 73% of men and 62% of women in their 20s in '06 said they had never been married, according to Census data. Just 23.5% of men and 31.5% of men and 39.5% of women in '00. (Analysis excludes those who are married but separated.) (USA Today 9/12/07)”

(Gary Foster, “Delaying Marriage,” *Religious Market Update*, (2007): 1)

“HIGHLIGHTS OF AMERICA’S CHILDREN: KEY NATIONAL INDICATORS OF WELL-BEING 2002”

“America's Children: Key National Indicators of Well-Being 2002, 2002 is the sixth annual report to the Nation on the condition of children in America. Eight contextual measures describe the changing population and family context in which children are living, and 24 indicators depict the well-being of children in the areas of economic security, health, behavior and social environment, and education. This year's report has a special feature on children of at least one foreign-born parent.”

“Part I: Population and Family Characteristics”

“In 2000, there were 70.4 million children under age 18 in the United States, or 26 percent of the population, down from a peak of 36 percent at the end of the baby boom (1964). Children are projected to remain a substantial percentage of the total population, and are projected to comprise 24 percent of the population in 2020.”

“The racial and ethnic diversity of America's children continues to increase. In 2000, 64 percent of U.S. children were white, non-Hispanic; 15 percent were black, non-Hispanic; 4 percent were Asian/Pacific Islander; and 1 percent were American Indian/Alaska Native. The number of Hispanic children has increased faster than that of any other racial and ethnic group, growing any other racial and ethnic group, growing from 9 percent of the child population in 1980 to 16 percent in 2000.”

“In 2001, 61 percent of children from birth through age 6 (not yet in kindergarten) received some form of child care on a regular basis from persons other than their parents.”

“In 1997, nearly half of preschoolers (children under age 5) with working mothers were primarily cared for by a relative while their mother worked, while 22 percent were primarily cared for by nonrelatives in a home-based environment and another 22 percent were cared for in a center-based arrangement.”

“Children were more likely to engage in some kind of organized before- or after-school activity as they aged. For example, in 2001, 27 percent of kindergarten through 3rd graders and 39 percent of 4th-through-8th graders participated in sports.”

“Part II: Indicators of Children's Well-Being”

“Economic Security Indicators”

“The poverty rate for children living with family members has decreased substantially since 1993 when it reached a high of 22 percent. In 2000, 16 percent of children lived in families with incomes below the poverty threshold. This percentage, also observed in 1999, represents the lowest poverty rate among children since 1979.”

“The decrease in poverty is apparent for children living in female-householder families and is more pronounced for black children. Among black children in female-householder families, about two-thirds lived below the poverty line from 1980 to 1993, and for the first time since 1980, fewer than half were living in poverty in 2000.”

“The percentage of children who had at least one parent working full time, all year has steadily increased from 70 percent in 1980 to 80 percent in 2000. In 2000, 91 percent of children living in two-parent families had at least one parent working full time, all year. This percentage was lower for children living in single male-headed families and single female-headed families (67 percent and 50 percent, respectively).”

“In 2000, 0.8 percent of children lived in households reporting child hunger, down from 1.0 percent in 1998. In 2000, 18 percent of children lived in households reporting any level of food insecurity, down from 20 percent in 1998. Children in families below the poverty line were nearly three times more likely to experience food insecurity and hunger than children in families with incomes above the poverty line.”

“According to the Healthy Eating Index, the proportion of children ages 2 to 5 with good diets improved from 21 percent to 27 percent between 1996 and 1998, reversing the decline from 1995 and 1996. However, the diet quality of children ages 6 to 9 changed little between 1996 and 1998. Children in families living in poverty were less likely than higher-income children to have a diet rated as good. In 1998, for children ages 2 to 5, 22 percent of those living in poverty had a good diet, compared with 29 percent of those living above the poverty line.”

“Health Indicators”

“Children living in poverty tend to be in poorer health than children living in higher-income families. Nevertheless, this gap narrowed between 1984 and 2000. In 1984, 62 percent of children living in poverty and 83 percent of children living at or above poverty were reported to be in very good or excellent health. By 2000, 70 percent of children living in poverty and 85 percent of children living at or above poverty were in very good or excellent health.”

“While the infant mortality rate did not decline in 1998, there was a significant drop in 1999, to 7 deaths per 1,000 live births.”

“Mortality for children ages 5 to 14 declined between 1998 and 1999. However, there was no significant change in mortality rates for children ages 1 to 4, or for adolescents ages 15 to 19.”

“The birth rate for adolescents continued to decline in 2000 to 27 births per 1,000 females ages 15 to 17, representing the lowest rate ever recorded. The bulk of the drop in the adolescent birth rate occurred between 1991 and 2000, when it dropped by nearly one-third.”

“Behavior and Social Environment Indicators”

“Cigarette use among adolescents shows continued indications of decline from 2000 to 2001. Daily smoking in the past month decreased from 14 percent to 12 percent among 10th-graders and from more than 7 percent to less than 6 percent among 8th-graders. Daily smoking rates did not change significantly for high school seniors from 2000 to 2001.”

“Since 1993, the violent crime victimization rate for youth ages 12 to 17 has decreased by 63 percent, from 44 violent crimes per 1,000 youth in 1993 to 16 per 1,000 youth in 2000.”

“Since 1993, the violent crime offending rate for youth ages 12 to 17 has decreased by 67 percent, from 52 violent crimes per 1,000 youth in 1993 to 17 per 1,000 youth in 2000.”

“Education Indicators”

“Between 1999 and 2001, the percentage of children ages 3 to 5 who were read to daily by a family member increased from 54 percent to 58 percent. This percentage has fluctuated since 1993, ranging from 53 percent to 58 percent.”

“In 2001, the percentage of high school graduates ages 25 to 29 who continued their education and received a bachelor's degree remained at the all-time high of 33 percent, which was achieved in 2000. The percentage of black, non-Hispanic high school graduates who earned a bachelor's degree increased from 14 percent in 1985 to 20 percent in 2001.”

“Special Feature”

“The foreign-born population of the United States has increased dramatically over the past few decades. In 1994, 15 percent of children living in the U.S. had at least one foreign-born parent; by 2001 this had increased to 19 percent of children.”

“The percentage of children whose parents have less than a high school diploma is much higher among children with a foreign-born parent. In 2001, 42 percent of foreign-born children with at least one foreign-born parent had a parent with less than a high school diploma, compared with 35 percent of native children with at least one foreign-born parent and 11 percent of native children with native parents.”

(www.childstats.gov/ac2002/highlight.asp)

“HOPESHARE STATISTICS”

“According to the Young Child Poverty Rates (U.S. Census Bureau, 2000), in the U.S.A today,”

“The young child poverty rate is twice as high in cities as in suburbs. But the increase in young child poverty from the 1970s to the 1990s was greater in suburbs (50 percent) than cities (31 percent).”

“Extreme poverty during the first five years has especially deleterious affects on children’s future life choices.”

“A third of today’s infants are born to unmarried mothers.”

“Most of today’s young children will spend part or all of their childhood apart from one of their parents.”

“Divorce has a greater affect on the household income of the custodial parents than the Great Depression had on the American economy.”

(Fagan and Rector, “The Effects of Divorce on America.” The Heritage Foundation, June 5, 2000)

Excerpts from **“THE AMERICAN PARADOX”**

“Between 1976 (670,000) and 1997 (3,200,000), the number of children reported neglected and abused nearly quintupled.”

“The proportion of children not living with two parents increased from 12 percent in 1960 to 32 percent in 1998.”

“Between 1960 (16,000) and 1997 (3,200,000), arrests for youth-on-youth crime increased sevenfold. During this same period, all types of juvenile arrests jumped from 475,000 (1960) to 1.74 million (1993). Meanwhile, the population of 14-17 year-olds only increased from 11 million to 14 million.”

“Depression rates for youths and young adults have risen rapidly. Teenage suicide tripled over the period from 1960 to the mid-1990s.”

(David G. Meyers, “The American Paradox,” Yale University Press, 2000)

“HOW HAPPY ARE YOUR KIDS?”

“Seventy percent of kids say they’re pleased with how much attention you give them.”

“A quarter of kids want more time with parents. And 17 percent of moms say they feel the same way. Most kids just want to hang out, chat about school, share meals. But a third wish you’d find time to talk about what’s important to them.”

“A third of tweens and nearly a quarter of teens wish their parents would spend less time working and more time with them.”

“IMPROVING YOUR TIME TOGETHER”

- **“Set up a routine.** They are never too old to be tucked in! ‘Teens and tweens tell me that the most comforting bonding moment is at night when they’re in bed, the lights are out and their parents sit on the edge of the bed to talk for a few moments,’ says Wiseman.”
- **“Take back your day.** ‘Eliminate one activity to make room for family,’ says Michele Borba, EdD, author of *12 Simple Secrets Real Moms Know* (Jossey-Bass). Or combine activities. To have more together-time with her three daughters, 14, 11, and 8, Brenda White, 40, of Louisville, Kentucky, says, ‘I’m now leading all three of their girl scout troops.’ That means a meeting a week and a field trip once a month on top of a demanding full-time job, but, says White, it’s worth every minute.”
- **“Make a plan.** Arrange a one-on-one date with your child every other week. Take each child on an overnight once a year. Have family movie nights.”
- **“Gather regularly.** ‘Everyone meets in the kitchen at 8:30 every night to go over the events of the day or just hang out for a half hour,’ says Borba.”
- **“Lower expectations.** ‘Don’t overwhelm yourself by always striving for ‘quality time,’ says Wiseman. ‘Go to the diner or coffee shop and have a conversation that’s not about schedules and responsibilities. Even if your child is silent, just sitting together is time well spent.’”

“THE PRESSURE’S ON”

“Stressed? Yes, say 60 percent of teens and nearly half of tweens. Here’s why:”

- **“Fear of other kids.** Half of tweens – both boys and girls – worry about being made fun of. Worse, a full 19 percent fear they’ll be beaten or attacked. Kids with these concerns may stop calling and hanging out with friends, spend most of their time at home, act clingy, and become sullen and withdrawn or angry and irritable, says Ron Zodkevitch, MD, a psychiatrist and member of *Family Circle*’s advisory board. ‘Talk about what’s going on. If you suspect bullying, insist that the school take action.’”
- **“Body image.** Nearly half of teens are concerned about their looks; 38 percent fret about weight. The antidote? Praise kids for their efforts, not their appearance. And be careful about criticizing your own or other people’s looks – your kids are listening. Remind them that models and actors are professionals whose career is all about working hard and looking good – they don’t represent the rest of us.”
- **“Cyberintrusions.”** Kids to parents: It’s not sex and violence on TV you should worry about, it’s what we see online. Your kids are right, says James P. Steyer of Common Sense Media, a kids’ media organization. ‘TV is passive. With new technology, kids reveal themselves to millions, often without understanding what the consequences could be.’”

“NO ONE TO TURN TO”

“Worried kids are less likely to talk with their parents. ‘Teens are more inclined to share feelings when they’re doing something,’ says Borba. ‘Invite them to make the salad or stir the sauce during dinner prep. Or plant yourself in a spot where they’re likely to be receptive – in front of the refrigerator at 5 o’clock.’ Get in your kid’s culture zone – even if it bores you. Is she crazy about GameCube? Kelly Clarkson? Hilary Duff? Google them!”

“WHO’S IN CHARGE?”

“Must-see TV”

“**Seventy percent of tweens and teens have a television in their bedroom.** Are you thinking it’s okay because everyone’s doing it? Don’t give in! You won’t know if they’re studying or watching reruns of back-to-back *Laguna Beach* episodes. Pull the plug, advises Wiseman. Say, ‘I made a mistake allowing you to have a TV in your room, so I’ve removed it. I know it seems unfair, but since we have one in the family room, I’m confident you will survive.’”

“Internet Trouble”

“**Ten percent of tweens and 48 percent of teens believe they can easily prevent you from knowing where they go online.** ‘Be strategic,’ says Wiseman. ‘Check the navigation bar on the computer to see where they’ve been.’ Keep computers where you can casually look over your child’s shoulder every hour or so. ‘I check my son’s cookies every few days,’ says Becky West, 47, the Cleveland, Ohio, mother of Aaron, 17. ‘If he goes where he shouldn’t, I unhook the Internet for two weeks. If it happens again, then the filters go on.’”

“Supervision Slide”

“**More than three-quarters of tweens and teens were online the day before the survey** – 11 percent without their parents knowing. ‘You don’t need to feel guilty,’ says Steyer. ‘But the new world of media and technology does mean you have to be a more involved parents in a different way.’ Get info at commonsense.com.

“Sneaky E-Mail”

“**A small but substantial number of tweens and teens have an e-mail account that their parents don’t know about.** ‘Privacy is important to kids but participating in activities you’re not aware of is dangerous,’ says Dr. Zodkevitch. ‘The basic rule is, parents need to know everywhere kids go online and who they’re e-mailing.’”

“The Blog Space”

“**Tweens and teens who don’t have a very good relationship with parents are twice as likely to have their own blog.** ‘If you limit your child’s Internet use,’ says Dr. Zodkevitch, ‘you’ll find time to do something together.’”

“Is Your Child Too Sad? Signs to Watch Out for...”

- “Apathy and boredom”
- “Sleep problems (up all night, sleeping all day); extreme fatigue”
- “Restlessness, irritability, no sense of humor”
- “Physical complaints like headaches, stomachaches, light-headedness”

- “Need for constant reassurance”
- “Aggressiveness and troublemaking”

“More Facts, Figures, and Advice”

“On Communicating...”

“Ninety-one percent of kids prefer talking to you face-to-face. Tech is fun, but real still rules.”

“What to do: Drop everything and talk with your child for at least a few minutes every single day.”

“Thirty-four percent wish their parents wouldn’t get mad at them so much.”

“How to help: Be clear and specific about what’s bothering you.”

“On Parent/Child Relationships...”

“Moms are far more satisfied with the parent-child connection than their kids – 92 percent to 79 percent. Do you check in, then listen without lecturing?”

“Forty-four percent of moms say it’s a good idea to treat our kids like friends. Of course you enjoy being with them. But it’s not really the same – friends don’t discipline you or hold you accountable for bad behavior. Parents do.”

“Seventy-four percent of moms say that their teens feel comfortable coming to them about almost anything. But only a little more than half of kids agree.”

“On the Net...”

“Six percent of tweens – which translates to more than 100, -- have their own blog. Too young, says Steyer. Not until high school ‘at the very earliest.’”

“Thirty-eight percent of girls 13 to 17 have a blog, versus only 17 percent of boys. Girls still love to gossip, gab, and get the word out.”

“Thirteen percent of tweens and teens reported that the day before the poll they’d surfed the net for four or more hours. Only 20 percent of all the kids who went online were there for schoolwork.”

“On School...”

“More than three-quarters of tweens and teens think college is in their future. But more than half are also in no hurry to grow up, and two-thirds of moms are in no rush for their kids to leave home.”

“Seventy-nine percent of kids were happy at school last year. Their favorite thing? Seeing friends, of course! Most disliked? You got it – homework, for half of tweens and a third of teens. Less than ten percent say their teachers are the best part of school.”

“This survey was conducted online on behalf of *Family Circle* by Harris Interactive, which polled 1,205 mothers of children ages 9 to 17 in the U.S. and 1,251 children ages 9 to 17 in the U.S. between March 21 and April 3, 2006. Results were weighted to be nationally representative.”

(Gay Norton Edelman, “How Happy Are Your Kids?” *Family Circle*, 2006, Meredith Corporation)

“STAYING IN THE NEST”

“Since 1970, the percentage of people 18 to 34 living with their parents increased...”

“Since 1970, the percentage of people 18 to 34 living with their parents increased 48%, from 12.5 million to 18.6 million, reports the Census Bureau. Among the causes are high housing costs and paying off college debt.”

(The Foster Letter: Religious Market Update, Gary D. Foster Consulting, September 10, 2006 [Leadership Journal Summer ‘06]: 3.)

“THE PARENTS TELEVISION COUNCIL”

“The Parents Television Council says children watching 'TV during the first hour of primetime, once dubbed the family hour, now encounter violence, profanity or sexual content every 3.5 minutes of non-commercial airtime.” (CR

Daily 2/19/08)

(Gary D. Foster, “Religious Market Update,” The FOSTER Letter, 10 March 2008)

“THE SCHOLARLY CONSENSUS ON MARRIAGE”

“Institute for American Values”

“Center for Marriage and Families”

“Fact Sheet No. 2, February, 2006”

“Marriage is an important social good, associated with an impressively broad array of positive outcomes for children and adults alike. Marriage is an important public good, associated with a range of economic, health, educational, and safety benefits that help local, state, and federal governments serve the common good.”

“— Sixteen social scientists, *Why Marriage Matters, Second Edition: Twenty-Six Conclusions from the Social Sciences*, 2005”

“Research clearly demonstrates that children growing up with two continuously married parents are less likely than other children to experience a wide range of cognitive, emotional, and social problems, not only during childhood, but also in adulthood. Although it is not possible to demonstrate that family

structure is the cause of these differences, studies that have used a variety of sophisticated statistical methods, including controls for genetic factors, suggest that this is the case. This distinction is even stronger if we focus on children growing up with two happily married biological parents.”

“— Paul R. Amato, “The Impact of Family Formation Change on the Cognitive, Social, and Emotional Well-Being of the Next Generation,” *The Future of Children*, Fall 2005”

“In addition to high poverty rates, single motherhood is a proxy for multiple risk factors that do not bode well for children ... Although we cannot say whether these marital-status differences are due to marriage per se or something about the parents who marry, there are theoretical reasons for believing that father absence and high levels of union instability are harmful to children. Child development theory, for example, tells us that nonresidential fathers are less likely to bond with their children, sociological theory tells us that father absence reduces children’s access to social capital, and some economists have argued that low contact between fathers and children reduces altruism. Moreover, the fact that married fathers have been increasing the amount of time they spend with their children suggests that father absence may become even more important in the future.”

“— Sara McLanahan, 2004 Presidential Address, Population Association of America”

“Few propositions have more empirical support in the social sciences than this one: Compared to all other family forms, families headed by married, biological parents are best for children.”

“— David Popenoe, Professor of Sociology, Rutgers University”

“The legal basis and public support involved in the institution of marriage help to create the most likely conditions for the development of factors that children need most to thrive — consistent, stable, loving attention from two parents who cooperate and have sufficient resources and support from two extended families, two sets of friends, and society.”

“— Mary Parke, *Are Married Parents Really Better for Children? What Research Says About the Effects of Family Structure on Child Well-Being*, Policy Brief, Center for Law and Social Policy, May 2003”

“A large body of social science research indicates that healthy, married-parent families are an optimal environment for promoting the well-being of children. Children raised by both biological parents are less likely than children raised in single- or step-parent families to be poor, to drop out of school, to have difficulty finding a job, to become teen parents or to experience emotional or behavioral problems. Children living with single mothers are five times as likely to be poor as those in two-parent families.”

“— *Marriage Promotion in Low-Income Families*, Fact Sheet, National Council on Family Relations, April 2003”

“In the partisan minefield of American welfare policy, a powerful consensus has emerged in recent years among social scientists, as well as state and federal policy makers. It sees single-parent families

as the dismal foundries that produced decades of child poverty, delinquency and crime. And it views the rise of such families, which began in the early 1960's and continued until about five years ago, as a singularly important indicator of social pathology. From a child's point of view, according to a growing body of social research, the most supportive household is one with two biological parents in a low-conflict marriage."

"— Elaine Harden, "Two-Parent Families Rise After Change in Welfare Laws," *New York Times*, August 12, 2001, page one"

"Quotable"

"If enough marriages had taken place to return the incidence of single parenting to 1970 levels, and the incomes of the men and women were combined, the poverty rate among children in 1998 would have fallen by about a third."

"Isabel V. Sawhill, "The Behavioral Aspects of Poverty," *The Public Interest*, Fall 2003"

"THE TROUBLE WITH BOYS"

"What's wrong with Danny? By almost every benchmark, boys across the nation and in every demographic group are falling behind."

"What's wrong with Danny? By almost every benchmark, boys across the nation and in every demographic group are falling behind. In elementary school, boys are two times more likely than girls to be diagnosed with learning disabilities and twice as likely to be placed in special-education classes. High-school boys are losing ground to girls on standardized writing tests. The number of boys who said they didn't like school rose 71 percent between 1980 and 2001, according to a University of Michigan study. Nowhere is the shift more evident than on college campuses. Thirty years ago men represented 58 percent of the undergraduate student body. Now they're a minority at 44 percent. This widening achievement gap, says Margaret Spellings, U.S. secretary of Education, 'has profound implications for the economy, society, families and democracy.'"

"Boys are biologically, developmentally and psychologically different from girls—and teachers need to learn how to bring out the best in every one. 'Very well-meaning people,' says Dr. Bruce Perry, a Houston neurologist who advocates for troubled kids, 'have created a biologically disrespectful model of education.'"

"Elementary School"

"Average Scores"

"Fourth-grade Students"

- "Boys ages 5-12 are 60% more likely than girls to have repeated at least one grade."

- “Girl’s reading scores improve 6% more than boy’s between kindergarten and third grade.”
- “First-to fifth-grade boys are 47% more likely than girls to have disabilities such as emotional disturbances, learning problems or speech impediments.”
- “Fourth-grade girls score 3% higher on standardized reading tests than boys.”
- “Fourth-grade girls score 12% higher on writing tests than boys.” (Source: U.S. Department of Education, Center for Diseases Control)

“It’s easy for middle-school boys to feel outgunned. Girls reach sexual maturity two years ahead of boys, but other, less visible differences put boys at a disadvantage, too. The prefrontal cortex is a knobby region of the brain directly behind the forehead that scientists believe helps humans organize complex thoughts, control their impulses and understand the consequences of their own behavior. In the last five years, Dr. Jay Giedd, an expert in brain development at the National Institutes of Health, has used brain scans to show that in girls, it reaches its maximum thickness by the age of 11 and, for the next decade or more, continues to mature. In boys, this process is delayed by 18 months.”

“One of the most reliable predictions of whether a boy will succeed or fail in high school rests on a single question: Does he have a man in his life to look up to?”

“A boy without a father figure is like an explorer without a map.”

(Peg Tyre, “The Trouble with Boys,” Newsweek Magazine, January 30, 2006)

“TRADITIONAL FAMILY IS ALIVE”

“Of the nation’s 73 million children, nearly 45 million (62%) live with their biological parents, according to the Census Bureau. Another 19 million live with their unmarried, biological mothers. Based on '04 surveys, the report also shows cohabiting families are on the rise, with 3.7 million children living with one biological parent and an unmarried partner. Jenny Tyree, Focus on the Family marriage analyst said, “Research continues to show that these children have poorer emotional health and are at higher risk to suffer abuse than their peers in married families. Marriage continues to be one of the greatest gifts a parent can give a child.” (CitizenLink 2/21/08)

(Gary D. Foster, “Religious Market Update,” The FOSTER Letter, 10 March 2008)

“WIVES WANT SOUL MATES”

“Wives want soul mates, romantic partners who are compatible together and bring out the best in each other. The relationship has satisfying intimacy and includes friendship, companionship, and often a spiritual component as well as love. This means they want a husband who will talk about his feelings and values emotional connections. Marriage counseling specialist Nancy Wasson advises husbands to:

1. Set a time with your spouse to talk and process the day’s events. It may be a few minutes, or it may

be longer. 2. Push your comfort zone in to really share your feelings, problems, and concerns. Husbands often don't share important things to avoid worrying their wives. 3. Often a man's first reaction is to offer a solution. Instead realize and accept that with women, the real goal is to talk about the issue. 4. Consider marriage counseling if you're experiencing continuing difficulty with expressing your feelings or handling negative emotions. 5. Remember most change occurs when you make a number of small steps in a new direction. Keep trying! (eMedia Newswire 7/24/06)"

(Gary D. Foster, "Religious Market Update," August 10, 2006, p1)

"WORKING PARENTS"

"Working parents in the U.S. spend a mere 21 minutes a day when their primary attention is devoted to looking after their children. In the UK it's 19 minutes. Yet a U.S. child spends up to 10.25 hours a day with mass media."

(The Foster Letter: Religious Market Update, Gary D. Foster Consulting, September 10, 2006 [The Daily Mail 7/19/06]: 2.)

"YOUNG SINGLES AIM AT LASTING MARRIAGE"

"Young singles adults are intensely averse to divorce and want to marry a lifelong 'soul mate,' says a study by the National Marriage Project."

"They know who they want—Miss or Mr. Right—and they know what they don't want—divorce," said Barbara Dafoe Whitehead, who runs the project with David Popenoe, a sociology professor at Rutgers University in New Brunswick, N.J."

"Young people's aspirations for lasting marriages come at a time when marriage is weakening as a social institution, the two researchers said in their 'State of Our Unions: 2001' report, issued today."

"Ninety-four percent of never-married adults agree that 'when you marry, you want your spouse to be your soul mate, first and foremost,' the researcher said, citing data from a Gallup poll taken this year of 1,003 adults ages 20 to 29."

"An upside of the 'soul mate' approach is that a high percentage of young people—86 percent—believe that marriage is 'hard work and a full-time job.'"

"The desire for a compatible mate may be fueling the rise in cohabiting, which has grown from 3.1 million households in 1990 to 5.4 million in 2000, the researchers said."

"Many believe that living together yields more useful information about a partner than simply dating for a period of time,' they wrote. Therefore, if they're looking for a soul mate, they may believe they have to live with someone '24/7.'"

“The Gallup poll found that 44 percent of young people had cohabited. Of these, nearly half of the men and more than a third of the women had lived with more than one partner.”

“In their study, Mr. Popenoe and Mrs. Whitehead found that 88 percent of young adults agreed that the divorce rate was too high.”

“They also found that:”

“Eighty-two percent think it’s ‘unwise’ for a woman to rely on marriage for financial security.”

“Seventy-nine percent believe that ‘marriage is nobody’s business but the two people involved.’”

“Sixty-two percent say it’s OK—but not ideal—for a single adult woman to have a child if she hasn’t found the right man to marry.”

“Forty-three percent believe the government should give cohabiting couples the same benefits as married couples.”

(www.washtimes.com/national/20010613-96511118.htm)
