



Religiosity Resources

A literature review of youth and religion

February 2015



This literature review was compiled by the Mercyhurst University Civic Institute for the Religiosity Team of the Community Action Plan in Erie County Pennsylvania. It consists of articles and studies discussing the connection between youth, crime, religion and risky behaviors. Below you will find the titles and a brief overview of these articles along with the website link for further reading.

Youth and Religion

1. YOUNG AMERICANS LOSING THEIR RELIGION

Harris, D. (2009, May 6). *Young Americans Losing Their Religion*. *ABC News*.

<http://abcnews.go.com/Politics/story?id=7513343&page=1>

New research shows young Americans are dramatically less likely to go to church -- or to participate in any form of organized religion -- than their parents and grandparents.

2. RELIGION AND U.S. SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS

Wallace Jr., J., Forman, T., Caldwell, C., & Willis, D. (n.d.). *Religion and U.S. Secondary School Students; Current Patterns, Recent Trends, and Sociodemographic Correlates*. *Youth & Society*, 35(1), 98-125.

<http://ifacunji.com/tyforman/publications/wallace%20et%20al%202003%20religion%20and%20us%20secondary%20school%20students.pdf>

A nation-wide study examined current patterns, recent trends, and socio-demographics in correlation with religiosity among American adolescents.

3. IS RELIGION GOOD FOR ADOLESCENT HEALTH?

Wallace Jr., J. (n.d.). *Is religion good for adolescent health? A national study of American High School Seniors*.

<http://www.baylor.edu/content/services/document.php/24226.pdf>

This study uses data to examine the relationship between religion and behavioral predictors of adolescent illness and premature death.

4. MORE YOUNG PEOPLE ARE MOVING AWAY FROM RELIGION, BUT WHY?

More Young People Are Moving Away From Religion, But Why? (n.d.). Retrieved December 3, 2014.

<http://www.npr.org/2013/01/15/169342349/more-young-people-are-moving-away-from-religion-but-why>

NPR's David Greene speaks with six people, three young women and three young men, all struggling with the role of faith and religion in their lives.

5. YOUNG AMERICANS: THEIR FAITH, ATTITUDES, AND VALUES

Nover, A. (2010, April). *Young Americans: Their Faith, Attitudes, and Values*. Retrieved December 3, 2014.

http://civicyouth.org/PopUps/FactSheets/Religion_Fact_Sheet_Final.pdf

This article indicates that young Americans who are more religious are more engaged, both civically and politically, than young people who are less religious, especially those with no religious affiliation.

6. MAPPING AMERICAN ADOLESCENT RELIGIOUS

Smith, C., Lundquist-Denton, M., Faris, R., & Regnerus, M. (n.d.). Mapping American Adolescent Religious Participation. *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion*, 41(4), 597-612.

http://www.youthandreligion.org/sites/youthandreligion.org/files/imported/publications/docs/JSSR_article.pdf

This study describes youth religious participation by variables of religious affiliation, religious service attendance, and involvement in church youth groups; it then examines the effects of gender, race, age, and region on those variables.

7. RELIGION'S ROLE IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF YOUTH

Ream, G. (n.d.). Religion's Role in the development of Youth.

<http://www.human.cornell.edu/hd/circ/publications/upload/HE-CIRC-pb-ReamPDF.pdf>

This paper discusses the prevalence of religion among America's youth, the impact of religion on their lives, and their agency over their own religious and spiritual development.

8. POSITIVE YOUTH DEVELOPMENT IN THE UNITED STATES: RESEARCH FINDINGS ON EVALUATIONS OF POSITIVE YOUTH DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS

Catalano, R., Berglund, M., Ryan, J., Lonczak, H., & Hawkins, J. (2004). Positive Youth Development in the United States: Research Findings on Evaluations of Positive Youth Development Programs. *The ANNALS of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 2004(597), 98-124.

<http://ann.sagepub.com/content/591/1/98.full.pdf+html>

The Positive Youth Development Evaluation project sought to determine how youth development programs have been defined and then to locate the definitions, through a structured search, strong evaluations of these programs and summarize the outcomes of these evaluations

9. THE DEMOGRAPHICS OF SPIRITUALITY AND RELIGIOSITY AMONG YOUTH: INTERNATIONAL AND U.S. PATTERNS

Lippman, L., & McIntosh, H. (2010, September). The Demographics of Spirituality and Reigiosity Among Youth: International and U.S. Patterns.

<http://www.childtrends.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/01/Spirituality-and-Religiosity-Among-Youth.pdf>

This survey describes current patterns of religiosity and spirituality among youth and young adults around the world.

10. POSITIVE YOUTH DEVELOPMENT, PARTICIPATION IN COMMUNITY YOUTH DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS, AND COMMUNITY CONTRIBUTIONS OF FIFTH-GRADE ADOLESCENTS: FINDINGS FROM THE FIRST WAVE OF THE 4-H STUDY OF POSITIVE YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

Lerner, R., Lerner, J., Almerigi, J., Theokas, C., Phelps, E., Gestsdottir, S., ... Von Eye, A. (n.d.). Positive Youth Development, Participation in Community Youth Development Programs, and COmmunity Contributions of Fifth-Grade Adolescents: Findings From the First Wave Of the 4-H study of Positive Youth Development. *The Journal of Early Adolescence*, 2005(25), 17-71.

http://www.mentoring.org/downloads/mentoring_1068.pdf

This article describes the theoretical and methodological components of the study and reports some key findings derived from the first wave of data collection, which occurred in 2002 through 2003.

11. YOUTH HELPING AMERICA: THE ROLE OF SOCIAL INSTITUTIONS IN TEEN VOLUNTEERING

ISSUE BRIEF: Youth Helping America: The Role of Social Institutions in Teen Volunteering (n.d.). Retrieved December 15, 2014.

http://www.nationalservice.gov/pdf/05_1130_LSA_YHA_SI_factsheet.pdf

This fact sheet from The Corporation for National and Community Service highlights the role different organizations, including Religious Institutions, play in youth volunteerism.

12. PARENTS ARE TOP INFLUENCE IN TEENS REMAINING ACTIVE IN RELIGION AS YOUNG ADULTS

Briggs, David (2014, Nov 5) Parents are top influence in teens remaining active in religion as young adults. Retrieved February 19, 2015.

<http://www.christiancentury.org/article/2014-11/parents-no-1-influence-teens-remaining-religiously-active-young-adults>

This article discusses the large role parental religious activity plays in the religious commitment of young people.

Risk and Protective Factors (includes information on religiosity as a protective factor)

1. RISK AND PROTECTIVE FACTORS OF CHILD DELINQUENCY

Wasserman, G., Keenan, K., Tremblay, R., Cole, J., Herrenkohl, T., Loeber, R., & Petechuk, D. (2003, April 1). Risk and Protective Factors of Child Delinquency. *Child Delinquency Bulletin Series from the U.S. Department of Justice*, 1-15.

<https://www.ncjrs.gov/pdffiles1/ojdp/193409.pdf>

This Study Group identified particular risk and protective factors that are crucial to developing effective early intervention and protection programs for young offenders. This study particularly lists religiosity as a known protective factor when it comes to child delinquency.

2. THE ROLE OF RISK AND PROTECTIVE FACTORS IN SUBSTANCE USE ACROSS ADOLESCENCE

Cleveland, M. J., Feinberg, M. E., Bontempo, D. E., & Greenberg, M. T. (2008). The Role of Risk and Protective Factors in Substance Use across Adolescence. *The Journal of Adolescent Health : Official Publication of the Society for Adolescent Medicine*, 43(2), 157–164. doi:10.1016/j.jadohealth.2008.01.015

<http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2518980/>

This study compared the relative influence of risk and protective factors across several domains on adolescent substance use in a large sample of youth.

Substance Use and Religiosity

1. RELIGIOSITY AND TEEN DRUG USE RECONSIDERED: A SOCIAL CAPITAL PERSPECTIVE

Cleveland, M., Feinberg, M., Bontempo, D., & Greenberg, M. (2008). Religiosity and Teen drug use reconsidered: A social capital perspective. *American Journal of Preventative Medicine*, 43(2), 157-164. Retrieved from

<http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2518980/>

<http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/journal/07493797/32/6/supp/S>

This study revisits the relationship between religiosity and teen drug use. It concludes that elements of both religious and secular social capital are associated with lower reported drug use.

2. RELIGION, RACE, AND ABSTINENCE FROM DRUG USE AMONG AMERICAN ADOLESCENTS

Wallace Jr., J., Brown, T., Bachman, J., & LaVeist, T. (2003). Religion, Race, and Abstinence From Drug Use Among American Adolescents. *Monitoring the Future Occasional Paper 58*.

<http://monitoringthefuture.org/pubs/occpapers/occ58.pdf>

This study examines the relationship between religiosity and abstaining from substance abuse and the extent to which race differences in religiosity may help to explain the consistent finding of race differences in adolescent substance use.

3. RELIGIOUS PARTICIPATION AND RISKY HEALTH BEHAVIORS AMONG ADOLESCENTS

Mello, J., & Freeborn, B. (n.d.). Religious Participation and Risky Health Behaviors Among Adolescents.

http://www.thearda.com/asrec/archive/papers/Mellor_Risky_Health.pdf

This study uses the data from the National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent Health to identify the effect of religious participation on smoking, binge drinking and marijuana use.

4. FAMILY, RELIGIOSITY, AND THE RISK OF ADOLESCENT DRUG USE

Stephen J. Bahr, Suzanne L. Maughan, Anastasios C. Marcos and Bingdao Li (1998, November). Family, Religiosity, and the Risk of Adolescent Drug Use. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, Vol. 60, No. 4 (Nov., 1998), pp. 979-992

<http://www.jstor.org/stable/353639>

This study used random survey data to estimate how mother-adolescent bonding, father adolescent bonding, parental monitoring, family aggression, family drug problems, and religiosity were associated with adolescent drug use.

5. IN U.S., STRONG LINK BETWEEN CHURCH ATTENDANCE, SMOKING

In U.S., Strong Link Between Church Attendance, Smoking. (2013, August 5).

<http://www.gallup.com/poll/163856/strong-link-church-attendance-smoking.aspx>

This poll shows that smoking in the US is highly correlated with religiosity, with those who never attend church almost three times as likely to smoke as those who attend weekly.

Religion in the United States

1. IS RELIGION IN AMERICA ON THE DECLINE?

Is Religion In America in Decline? (2011, April 2). *The Huffington Post*.

http://www.huffingtonpost.com/david-briggs/is-religion-in-america-in_b_843801.html

This study looks at research taken from traditional beliefs and best practices and discusses whether the staying power of religion in the west is stable or declining.

2. RELIGIOUS COMPOSITION OF THE U.S.

Lugo, L., Stencel, S., Green, J., Smith, G., Cox, D., Pond, A., ... Plaveniece, L. (2008). U.S. Religious Landscape Survey: Religious Affiliation; Diverse and Dynamic. *The Forum on Religion & Public Life*, 1-210.

<http://religions.pewforum.org/pdf/report-religious-landscape-study-full.pdf>

Page 15 of this PDF shows the table of Religious Composition of the U.S.

3. IN THE U.S. RIDE IN RELIGIOUS “NONES” SLOWS IN 2012 – GALLUP POLL

In U.S., Rise in Religious "Nones" Slows in 2012. (2013, January 10).

<http://www.gallup.com/poll/159785/rise-religious-nones-slows-2012.aspx>

This study shows the rise in the religious "nones" over time is one of the most significant trends in religious measurement in the United States.

4. GOD IS ALIVE AND WELL IN AMERICA

Burke, D. (2013, January 7). God Is Alive And Well In America, Says Gallup Chief. Retrieved Dec 15, 2014.

http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2013/01/08/god-is-alive-and-well-in-america-says-gallup-chief_n_2426706.html

This article looks at the “decline in religion in America” from a longer-term perspective and argues that it is not an accurate picture of religion in the US.

5. LIFEWAY RESEARCH FINDS AMERICAN “MILLENNIALS” PREFER EXPERIENCE OVER EXPERTISE

Phillipson, R. (2010, November 3). LifeWay Research Finds American 'Millennials' Prefer Experience Over Expertise.

<http://www.lifewayresearch.com/2010/11/03/lifeway-research-finds-american-millennials-prefer-experience-over-expertise/>

When seeking information or advice, almost two-thirds of American “Millennials” – those born between 1980 and 1991 – prefer to rub shoulders with other people who have personal experience rather than a single recognized expert

6. RELIGION AMONG THE MILLENNIALS- INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW

Religion Among the Millennials. (2010, February 1).

<http://www.pewforum.org/2010/02/17/religion-among-the-millennials/>

This article looks at the involvement of the millennial generation with religion compared with previous generations.

7. MOST AMERICANS SAY RELIGION IS LOSING INFLUENCE IN U.S. – GALLUP POLL

Gallup: Most Americans Say Religion Is Losing Influence in US. (2013, May 29).

<http://www.gallup.com/poll/162803/americans-say-religion-losing-influence.aspx>

According to this poll, most Americans say that religion is losing its influence in the U.S., but 75% of Americans questioned said they think it would be positive for American society if more Americans were religious.