



THE FAMILY
POLICY COUNCIL
OF WEST VIRGINIA

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NEWS Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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New Survey Shows Children Have Fewer Problems at Home and at School When They Live In Intact Married Families that Worship Weekly

CHARLESTON, WV - A new study released today by the Family Policy Council of West Virginia finds that children have fewer problems at school and home when they live with both biological parents and frequently attend religious services. Drs. Nicholas Zill¹ and Philip Fletcher² co-authored the new study which analyzes data from the National Survey of Children's Health.

Among their remarkable findings: children in this group are *five times less likely to repeat a grade*, less likely to have behavior problems at home and school, and are more likely to be cooperative and understanding of others' feelings. Parents of these children report less stress, healthier parent-child relationships, and fewer concerns about their children's achievement. These differences hold up even after controlling for family income and poverty, low parent education levels, and race and ethnicity.

Dr. Pat Fagan, senior fellow and the director of FRC's Center for Family and Religion released the following statement regarding the study's findings:

"This new study further illustrates that children thrive most when living in an intact married family that worships weekly. Fewer behavioral problems, less stress, healthier relationships and greater educational achievement are all benefits of this strong family structure.

"Social science data continue to demonstrate overwhelmingly that the intact married family that worships weekly is the greatest generator of human goods and social benefits

¹ Dr. Nicholas Zill is the founding president of Child Trends and the former vice president of Westat, and a member of the National Academy of Sciences.

² Dr. Philip Fletcher is a research psychologist at Westat.

and is the core strength of the United States. Policy makers should strongly consider whether their policy proposals give support to such a family structure. Children are not the only beneficiaries but also their parents, families, communities, and all of society.”

“This study reminds us that the government should promote and encourage strong families,” said Jeremy Dys of the Family Policy Council of West Virginia. “It is a reminder that the family ought to be the first priority for our leaders, not an afterthought. Good policies start at home and in church, influencing government. Bad policies start in government and seep into the home.”

A copy of the study can be downloaded by visiting www.familypolicywv.com

The Family Policy Council of West Virginia is a servant organization that advocates for policies that embrace the sanctity of human life, enrich marriage, and safeguard religious freedom.

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