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THE KIDS ARE ALL RIGHT

WorldNetDaily

American teens: We want our virginity back

Study shows majority rethinking pop culture's love affair with casual sex

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By Drew Zahn

WorldNetDaily

Just in time for Valentine's Day, a new study of teenagers shows America's youth are reconsidering the morality of sex and embracing the value of abstinence before marriage.

Half of the over 5,000 teens surveyed concluded that sex before marriage was "never" morally acceptable; over 70 percent rejected the practice of "living together" before marriage; and 61 percent confessed they would like to be a virgin on their wedding day.

Furthermore, 63 percent agreed, "If I wasn't a virgin and I could change the past, I would have sex *after* marriage."

The verified online [survey of teens aged 13-18](#) was conducted by the international Christian children's ministry [OneHope](#) and strictly randomized to include a proportioned mix of students from different races, parts of the country and urban vs. rural residence.

Chad Causey, OneHope's vice president of global ministries explained the survey's questions about sexuality were merely part of a broader attempt to understand how teens think.

"There is a lot of research about young people, but when do we hear directly from them?" Causey asked in a statement. "That's why OneHope conducts research around the world, asking youth themselves what impacts them most. We use this research to better understand their needs, meet them at their points of pain and bring them hope through media experiences conveying God's love."



Causey warned, however, the study shows teens ill-prepared to be able to hold to their convictions.

(Story continues below)

"What was striking to us was, while we celebrated the 61 percent who said that they wanted to be a virgin when they were married, it became quickly apparent that that belief was loosely held," Causey told CBN News. "Even among the students who saw ... virginity is something to be saved for marriage, many of them, 77 percent, believe there's nothing wrong with passionate kissing; a third of them, 34 percent, believed it was OK to have sex before marriage; in other words, their belief about virginity or about preserving intimacy for marriage was a very private belief. They didn't see it as something that was right, they saw it as something that was right for them, and that came through more and more frequently in the research."

In another, corroborating example, 82 percent of the teens said they believed "God intended marriage to last for a lifetime," but 76 percent wouldn't count it wrong for a married couple – even with children – to get divorced if "they do not love each other anymore."

Likewise, 64 percent of the teens said religion is somewhat or very important to them, but 65 percent also said they believe truth is relative.

Other findings from the survey suggested many of the students lack support from faith, church and family.

For example, 59 percent of the teens said the Bible has little to no influence on their thoughts and actions, and 75 percent equally dismissed the influence of pastors and youth pastors.

Causey told CBN, however, that the key to supporting the teens' convictions lies at home.

"The faith community has a powerful influence, but the No. 1 influencer, still, above any other, for the adolescents we surveyed was their parents," he said. "Parents were the top influencer, not only about sexuality, but about all of life issues."

In fact, the study showed, 80 percent of the teens cited parents as having some or a lot of influence over their thoughts and actions, while 58 percent affirmed, "I want a marriage like my parents."

Causey cautioned that parents, however, are too often fumbling the influence given them.

"Out of all of the students that we surveyed," he explained, "33 percent didn't spend more than 15 minutes a week talking with their dad."

Nevertheless, Causey said, it's not too late for moms and dads to pick up the ball again:

"We see that they want the influence of their parents, they esteem it," he said. "So we think one of the greatest things that can happen is for parents to spend time talking to their kids, and not just with their young children, but their older adolescent children as well."

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