

The future of the family depends on the future parents.

The Extent of Fatherlessness in U.S.

The data below record the prevalence of physical fatherlessness, which affects more than 25,000,000 children. Emotional fatherlessness--when dad is in the home, but not emotionally engaged with his child's life--affects millions more.

1. Current Data

- a. According to 72.2 % of the U.S. population, fatherlessness is the most significant family or social problem facing America.
- b. --Source: National Center for Fathering, **Fathering in America Poll**, January, 1999.
- c. An estimated 24.7 million children live absent their biological father.

- 63% of [youth suicides](#) are from fatherless homes.

[U. S. D.H.H.S. Bureau of the Census]

- 90% of all homeless and runaway children are from fatherless homes.
- 85% of all children that exhibit behavioral disorders come from fatherless homes.

[Center for Disease Control]

- 80% of rapists motivated with displaced anger come from fatherless homes.

[*Criminal Justice and Behavior*, Vol. 14 p. 403-26]

- 71% of all high school dropouts come from fatherless homes.

[National Principals Association *Report on the State of High Schools*]

- 70% of juveniles in state operated institutions come from fatherless homes

[U.S. Dept. of Justice, Special Report, Sept., 1988]

- 85% of all youths sitting in prisons grew up in a fatherless home.

[Fulton County Georgia Jail Populations and Texas Dept. of Corrections, 1992]

- Nearly 2 of every 5 children in America do not live with their fathers.

[US News and World Report, February 27, 1995, p.39]

There are:

- 11,268,000 total custodial mothers
- 2,907,000 total custodial fathers

[*Current Populations Reports*, US Bureau of the Census, Series P-20, No. 458, 1991]

What does this mean? Children from fatherless homes are:

- 4.6 times more likely to commit [suicide](#),
- 6.6 times to become teenaged mothers (if they are girls, of course),
- 24.3 times more likely to run away,
- 15.3 times more likely to have behavioral disorders,
- 6.3 times more likely to be in a state-operated institutions,
- 10.8 times more likely to commit rape,
- 6.6 times more likely to drop out of school,
- 15.3 times more likely to end up in prison while a teenager.

(The calculation of the relative risks shown in the preceding list is based on 27% of children being in the care of single mothers.)

and — compared to children who are in the care of two biological, married parents — children who are in the care of single mothers are:

- 33 times more likely to be seriously abused (so that they will require medical attention), and
- 73 times more likely to be killed.

[*"[Marriage: The Safest Place for Women and Children](#)"*, by Patrick F. Fagan and Kirk A. Johnson, Ph.D. Backgrounder #1535.]

Bridgers (born 1977-94)

This is the generation which is the "echo" of the baby boom, and at 72 million, has almost as large a membership as its parents, the Baby Boomers (76 million).

This is the most unchurched US generation. All prior generations were (on average) at least a bit churched by their parents, so this is the first predominantly unchurched generation.

This is also the first generation raised on 50 TV channels vs. four, and they are totally used to an MTV culture. Their typical attention span is only seven to eight minutes. They are very visually oriented.

They were, by and large, raised without moral values.

The majority have not been raised with their biological father in the home.

Only about 27% of them marry.

Over 60% divorce in 5 years or less.

Around 35% of them when pregnant list no man on the birth certificate.

This generation could produce an 80% fatherless rate in the next generation.

Only 4% are considered evangelical Christians.

Believers by Generation (all denominations)

In a survey of 6000 people, with 1300-1500 people in each of the generations, the following percentages of each generation identified themselves as Christian.

GI and Silent generations - born before 1926, and 1927-45, respectively - **65% Christian**

Baby Boom - born 1946-64 - **35% Christian**

Gen X (baby bust) - born 1965-76 - **15% Christian**

Older Bridgers (age 17+) - born 1976-81 - **4% Christian**

The same survey showed that 83% of those who become Christians do so before age 20.

For more information see Dr. Thomas Rainer's book, *The Bridger Generation*

National Foster Care Youth Statistics

- There are more than 500,000 children and youth in foster care in the U.S.; approximately 20,000 youth “age out” (become orphans) or emancipate from foster care each year.
- 100,000 foster youth live in California.
- In California, 65% of youth leaving foster care do so without a place to live.
- Up to 50% of former foster /probation, youth become homeless within the first 18 months of emancipation.

- Twenty seven percent (27%) of the homeless population spent time in foster care.
- Fifty-eight percent (58%) of all young adults accessing federally funded youth shelters in 1997 had previously been in foster care.
- Less than half of former foster youth are employed 2.5-4 years after leaving foster care, and only 38% have maintained employment for at least one year.
- Youth in foster care are 44% less likely to graduate from high school and after emancipation, 40 – 50 percent never complete high school.
- Girls in foster care are six times more likely to give birth before the age of 21 than the general population.
- Sixty percent (60%) of women who emancipate from foster care become parents within 2.5-4 years after exiting care.
- Parents with a history of foster care are almost twice as likely as parents with no such history to see their own children placed in foster care or become homeless.

A few years ago my wife and I felt led to take the required foster care class in our area. In this class sat two Christian couples (one was us), two gay men, and eleven single women.

Q. Where were the fathers? Where was the church?

A. Unfortunately not there.

Q. How many children would each church body in the U.S. have to take in to clean out the foster care system?

A. Not even two per church...

According to the book *Beyond Mega-church Myths*, there were 320,000 Christian U.S. churches in 2007. Of these U.S. churches, 1,250 were mega-churches with an average weekend attendance of 2,000 or more.

500,000 Children divided by 320,000 churches=1.5625 children per church body. This does not even include groups unknown by these statistics. Only word I can come up with is grieved...