

- “Passing the Torch: How Faith Moves Across Generations” (Institute for Family Studies + Communio, 2026)
- **Key finding:** Children whose parents attend church weekly are more than twice as likely to attend weekly as adults (26% vs. 12%).

- **National Study of Youth and Religion (NSYR, 2002–2013)**
- **Key finding:** Parents are the single most important influence on long-term religious outcomes.
- Without parental engagement, retention drops to single digits.
- **Key finding:** The **religious commitment of the father** is the **#1 predictor** of a child’s long-term faith—more than church programs, youth group, or Christian schooling.

Christian Smith (lead researcher) famously summarized it:

“Parents—**especially fathers**—are the most important pastors a child will ever have.”