
YOUNG ADULTS AND THE FAMILY: A PROCLAMATION TO THE WORLD

Views on truth linked to understanding and accepting doctrine and principles



ABOUT SKYLINE RESEARCH INSTITUTE AND THE FAMILY LITERACY PROJECT

The Skyline Research Institute is a private, non-profit organization that informs the public about the issues, attitudes, and trends shaping families in America and the world. It studies family policy; journalism and media; religion and public life; global attitudes and trends; and social and demographic trends on children, marriage, and family. All of the Institute's reports are available at thefamilyproclamation.org and familyliteracyproject.org

The Family Literacy Project™ is a program of Skyline Research Institute (SRI). The Family Literacy Project aims to help people of all ages to grow in the ability to discern and analyze the fundamental intersections of the family within social/cultural/political life (what SRI has uniquely reframed and reconceptualized as "family literacy"). The Institute works to advance and promote this new and innovative conceptual framework on the family by providing training and resources to help individuals, universities, and organizations provide the best tools to understand the complex roles that the family plays in human experience.

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YOUNG ADULTS AND THE FAMILY: A PROCLAMATION TO THE WORLD

Views on truth linked to understanding and accepting doctrine and principles

Society is changing, and so are its young adults. With the complicated fabric of a fast-paced changing world as a backdrop, the new [Family Literacy Project](#) survey provides insight into how today's young adults in The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints view the world around them. Where do young adults say they find truth? And, do they view eternal, absolute truth as right for some but not for others? Are traditional gender roles important when raising children? What are more beneficial to society in the long run, strong families or strong governments? Does religion make for happier marriages and are married people happier overall? How do young adults understand complex social issues in relation to doctrinal teachings? Are they comfortable sharing their views about marriage and family in the public square?

The new Family Literacy Project survey conducted April 30 – June 1, 2021 among U.S. Latter-day Saint young adults from 34 states answered questions about views on doctrines and principles taught in "[The Family: A Proclamation to the World](#)." Each paragraph was broken down into related questions to test "[family literacy](#)" (SRI's reconceptualized definition of family literacy within a new framework for understanding the role of the family in society):

PARAGRAPH	PRINCIPLE
Paragraph 1	Prophets and apostles as declarers of truth, the centrality of the family
Paragraph 2	Created in the image of God, premortal, mortal, eternal identity, and purpose
Paragraph 3	Pre-earth life, family relationships perpetuated beyond the grave
Paragraph 4	Marriage and children
Paragraph 5	Sanctity of life
Paragraph 6	Care and rearing of children, parental rights and responsibilities
Paragraph 7	Happiness in family life, gender roles in raising children, gender complementarity
Paragraph 8	Chastity, fidelity, family disintegration
Paragraph 9	Societal strength, sharing views on family and marriage in the public square

Religion is important for happiness, but commitment to society is last on the list

Overall, the vast majority of young adults say that religious conviction is the most important element for individual happiness. Nearly three quarters of Latter-day Saint young adults believe that people who worship and have religious beliefs are always or usually happier and more satisfied with life than those who do not (73%). When asked about their most

significant source of individual happiness, four-in-ten young adults say that religious conviction is at the top of their list (41%), while devotion to family ranks second highest on their list. Dedication to self-care is also very important for this age group, while commitment to society ranks the lowest on their list.

Children and gender roles

Children and childrearing are important for Latter-day Saint young adults. A majority say that overpopulation is not a source of apprehension for them. At the same time, nearly all young adults surveyed express strong commitment to providing the necessities of life to their children, along with the responsibility of giving them religious and moral education.

Despite the changes over the past half century in social conversations on gender roles and the decline of children being raised in a two-parent home, most Latter-

day Saint young adults believe that a married mother and father provide the ideal environment for raising children. Seven-in-ten say these traditional gender roles are best for kids, including 45% who firmly believe this and an additional 26% who believe this most of the time. Latter-day Saint young adults express strong concern over the lasting impact of divorce on children. The majority say they firmly believe that the dissolution of a marriage negatively impacts children on a long-term basis. None of young adults surveyed feel divorce has no lasting impact on children.

Young adults are still overwhelmingly family-oriented

For Latter-day Saint young adults, families are the greatest source of strength in society, with strong communities coming

in at a close second. Strong governments and militaries are viewed as being the least important for a strong society.

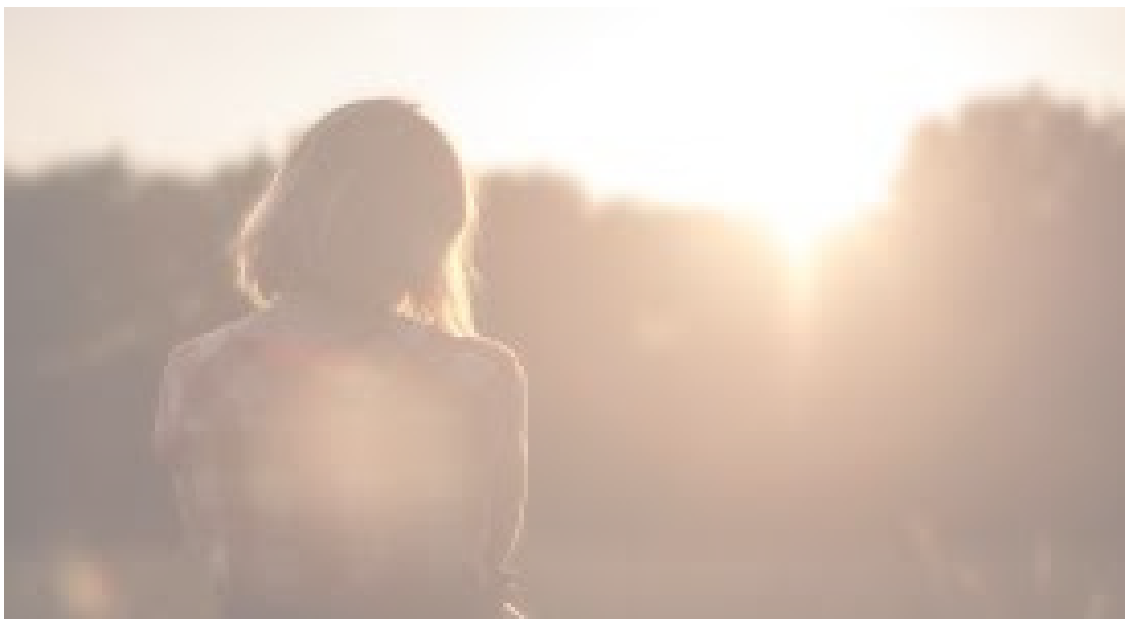
Who—and where—do they turn for truth?

The new Family Literacy Project survey finds that for young adult members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, the issue of truth—where to find it and who to turn to for it—can affect their understanding and acceptance of the doctrine and principles taught in “The Family: A Proclamation to the World.”

Belief about truth varies considerably among young adults. Some clearly face more challenges than others when trying to determine what is true and who they look to for truth. And the ways they approach truth differ in some significant ways.

For example, while most Latter-day Saint young adults say they believe in absolute truth themselves, one-in-three still express some uncertainty—and even more are unsure if the truths they believe in can be applied to other people.

Young adults report that truth can come from a variety of feelings (28%), which they say comprise of personal feelings through revelation, experiences, or the emotional response from stories via friends or family members. Equal shares say truth can come from the secular world (27%), whether it be scientific discovery, reason, research, or culture. Only one-in-seven respondents report turning to scripture for truth (14%). Smaller, but equal shares of responses indicate turning to God and Jesus Christ (11%) and prophets, apostles, and modern revelation (11%). Even fewer say they turn to the Holy Ghost and the spirit as a means of finding truth (5%).



More confidence in sharing beliefs about family than marriage

When it comes to sharing their beliefs on marriage and family online or in public, the majority of Latter-day Saint young adults say it is generally acceptable for people to share their personal views. However, the concerns young adults have about doing so themselves vary in some significant ways.

For example, young adults are more likely to say it is acceptable to talk about family online or in public but are somewhat more hesitant to discuss their own beliefs about marriage. Also, while they are half as likely to be very confident in doing so personally, their level of discomfort and uncertainty drops significantly when others share their beliefs about marriage.

Marriage, chastity, and cohabitation

Most Latter-day Saint young adults say that married people are generally happier and more satisfied in life than those who are unmarried (62%). However, young adults are more confident in the influence of religion on their happiness (73%) than marriage.

Their view of marital commitment and stability varies as well. Four-in-ten

young adults firmly believe that living together before marriage decreases the stability of the relationship (42%). The remaining express uncertainty, neutrality, or some support for living together as a means of increasing relationship stability. Nine-in-ten say they believe that complete fidelity before marriage is a realistic expectation in a relationship.

OTHER KEY FINDINGS

- When asked to describe some ways they find truth, over half of the answers (55%) describe truth as being found through either feelings or the secular world and culture (28% and 27%, respectively).
- Fully one-in-five say they disagree that truth applies to everyone: 20% somewhat believe truth is different for each person, 16% believe this most of the time, and 12% strongly believe this view. While the majority of Latter-day Saint young adults say they personally believe in absolute truth (65%), they are far less likely to say truth is universal for everyone (24%).

- A small but significant share of young adults say they have at least some support for cohabitation. 12% answered positively to some degree, while one-in-six young adults say they are neutral (16%). When compared to other questions on morality, this question has the largest share of young adults who say they are neutral on the issue.
- Among those young adults who have the highest levels of confidence in publicly sharing their views about family (21%), the same are less likely to feel at ease talking about the subject of marriage (15%).
- Seven-in-ten say traditional gender roles of a married mother and father are best for kids, including 45% who firmly believe this and an additional 26% who believe this most of the time. Still, roughly 14% express disagreement, in varying levels, that a married mother and father provide the best environment for raising children.

“

On finding truth, one-in-seven respondents report turning to scripture for truth (14%). Smaller, but equal shares of responses indicate turning to God and Jesus Christ (11%) and prophets, apostles, and modern revelation (11%). Even fewer say they turn to the Holy Ghost and the spirit as a means of finding truth (5%).

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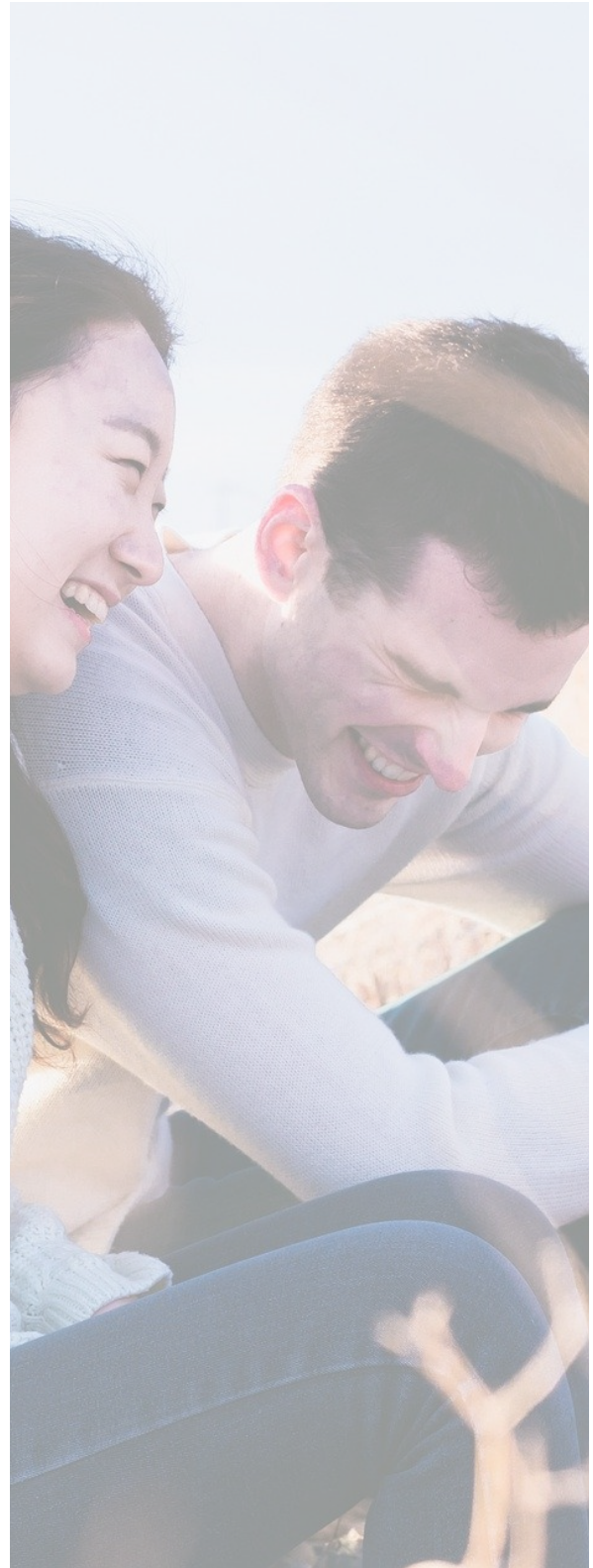
①

THE HAPPINESS FACTOR: FAITH, FIDELITY, CHASTITY, AND MARRIAGE ¹

The majority of Latter-day Saint young adults say marriage brings higher levels of happiness and satisfaction in life. Even though a large share of young adults believe that strong families are essential to the strength of a society overall, significantly smaller shares say that commitment to a family is central for their own personal happiness.

Their view of chastity, commitment, and stability in marriage varies as well. Four-in-ten say that living together before marriage decreases the stability of the relationship, while nine-in-ten say they believe that complete fidelity before marriage is a realistic expectation in a relationship.

When it comes to making the connection between religious conviction and happiness, Latter-day Saint young adults, seven-in-ten say that people who worship and have religious beliefs are usually happier than those who are not religious.

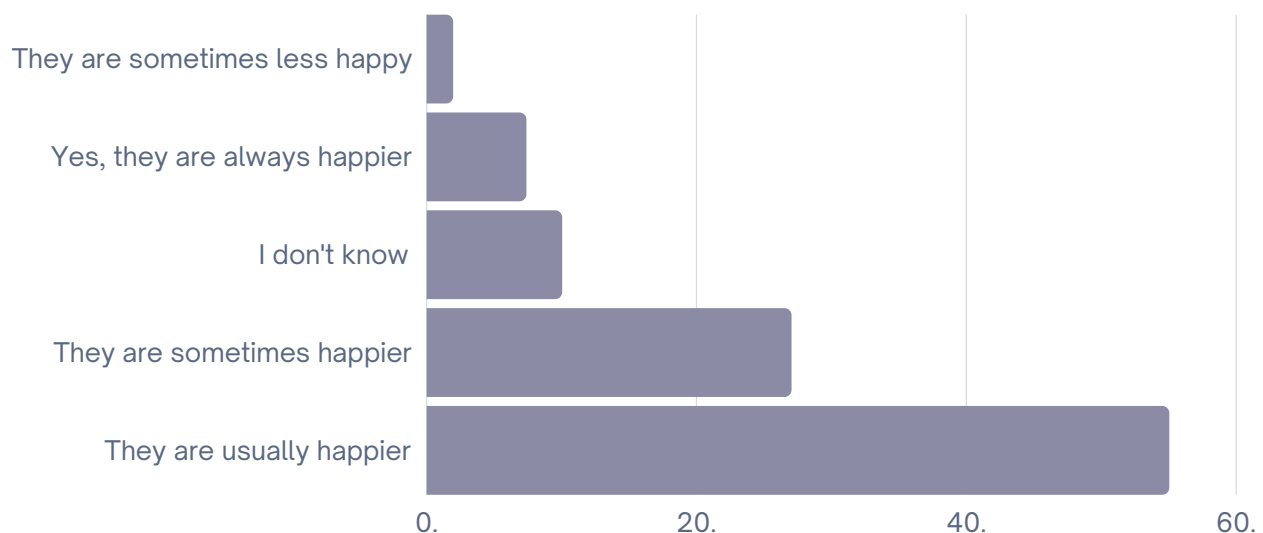


This section explores young adults' perceptions of happiness in life as it pertains to marriage, family, and faith. It also looks at their views on cohabitation before marriage and whether fidelity is a realistic expectation.

Young adults have differing views about happiness in marriage

Latter-day Saint young adults generally feel that people who are married are happier and more satisfied with life than those who are unmarried; 55% say this is usually the case, while 7% say this is always the case. Still, about four-in-ten (37%) expressed some degree of uncertainty as to whether marriage brings more happiness and satisfaction in life (sometimes, 27%; unsure, 10%).

Q16 In your experience, are married people generally happier and more satisfied with life than those who are not married?



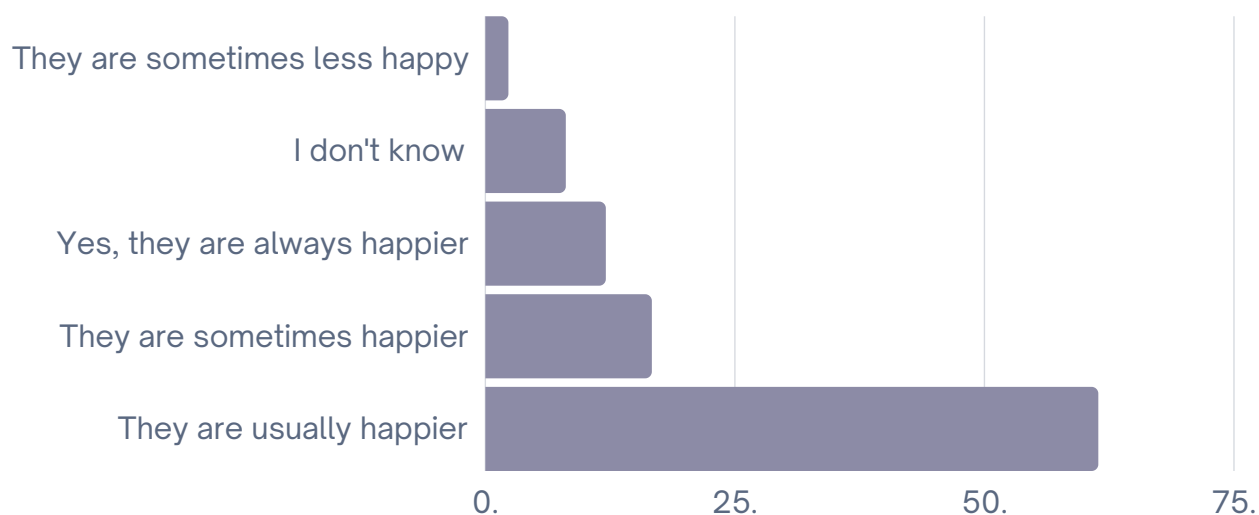
Most young adults believe that religious people are happier in life

Nearly three quarters of Latter-day Saint young adults say that people who worship and have religious beliefs are always or usually happier and more satisfied with life than those who do not (12% and 61% respectively). An additional 17% say they believe they are sometimes happier, with 11% expressing uncertainty or disagreement. When asked about their most significant source of individual happiness, four-in-ten young adults say that religious conviction is at the top of their list (41%).

The influence of religion vs. marriage on happiness

Latter-day Saint young adults are more confident in the influence of religion on their happiness than the influence of marriage on their happiness. Survey respondents say they believe that religious people are usually or always happier (73% total), while fewer believe that married people are usually or always happier (62% total).

Q17 Do you believe people who worship and have religious beliefs are any happier or more satisfied with life than those who do not?

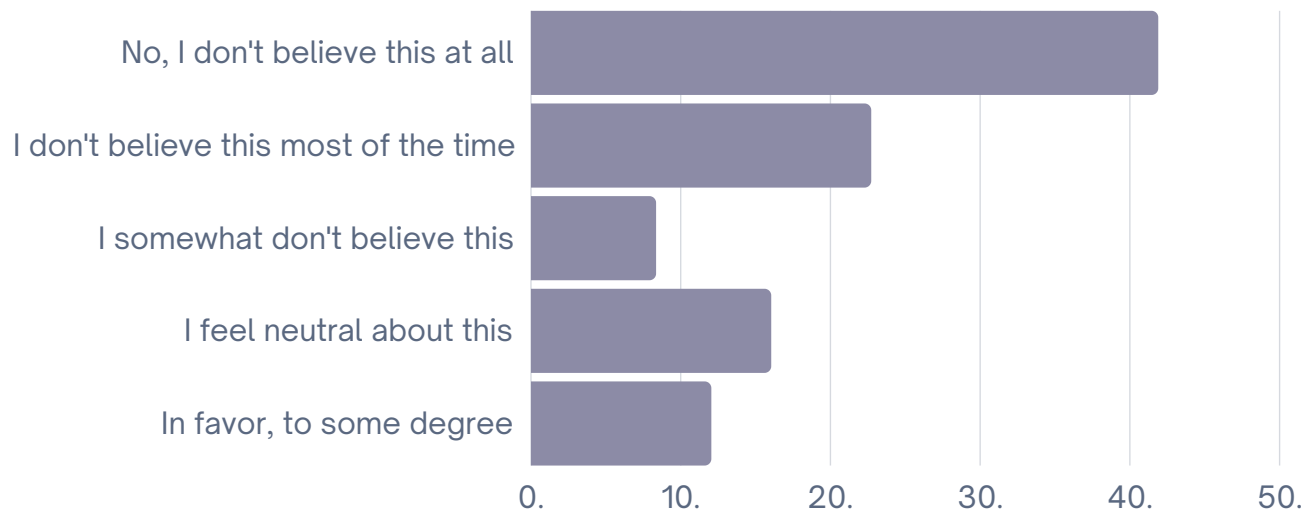


Varying views on cohabitation and chastity

About four-in-ten young adults firmly believe that living together before marriage decreases the stability of the relationship (42%). But, by double digits (17%), Latter-day Saint young adults express varying levels of opinions as to whether cohabitation might strengthen the relationship before marriage (59%).

A smaller share of young adults express at least some support for cohabitation. 12% answered positively to some degree while one-in-six young adults say they are neutral (16%). When compared to other questions on morality, this question has the largest share of young adults who say they are neutral on the issue.

Q19 Living together in a committed relationship prior to marriage increases the stability of the relationship.



When compared to other questions on morality, this question had the largest share of young adults who say they are neutral on the issue.

Nine-in-ten support complete fidelity after marriage

An overwhelming majority of Latter-day Saint young adults say they firmly believe that complete fidelity after marriage is a realistic expectation (91%). Still, some 9% have some uncertainty over the question of faithfulness to spouse after marriage.

CHAPTER END NOTES:

[1] The family proclamation paragraphs addressed in this section are Paragraph 6: "Husband and wife have a solemn responsibility to love and care for each other and for their children. ... Parents have a sacred duty to rear their children in love and righteousness, to provide for their physical and spiritual needs"; Paragraph 7: "The family is ordained of God. Marriage between man and woman is essential to His eternal plan. Children are entitled to birth within the bonds of matrimony, and to be reared by a father and a mother who honor marital vows with complete fidelity. Happiness in family life is most likely to be achieved when founded upon the teachings of the Lord Jesus Christ. Successful marriages and families are established and maintained on principles of faith, prayer, repentance, forgiveness, respect, love, compassion, work, and wholesome recreational activities. By divine design, fathers are to preside over their families in love and righteousness and are responsible to provide the necessities of life and protection for their families. Mothers are primarily responsible for the nurture of their children. In these sacred responsibilities, fathers and mothers are obligated to help one another as equal partners. Disability, death, or other circumstances may necessitate individual adaptation. Extended families should lend support when needed" and Paragraph 8: "We warn that individuals who violate covenants of chastity, who abuse spouse or offspring, or who fail to fulfill family responsibilities will one day stand accountable before God."

[2] Refer to question 18

②

SOURCES OF SOCIETAL STRENGTH, STABILITY, AND INDIVIDUAL HAPPINESS³

Family life is changing. While family structures and views on the marriage and family have transformed over the years, the new Family Literacy Project survey finds that most Latter-day Saint young adults still believe that families are the greatest source of strength in society.

Overall, the vast majority of young adults say that religious conviction is the most important element for individual happiness, while devotion to family ranks second highest on their list. Dedication to self-care is also very important for this age group, while commitment to society ranks the lowest.

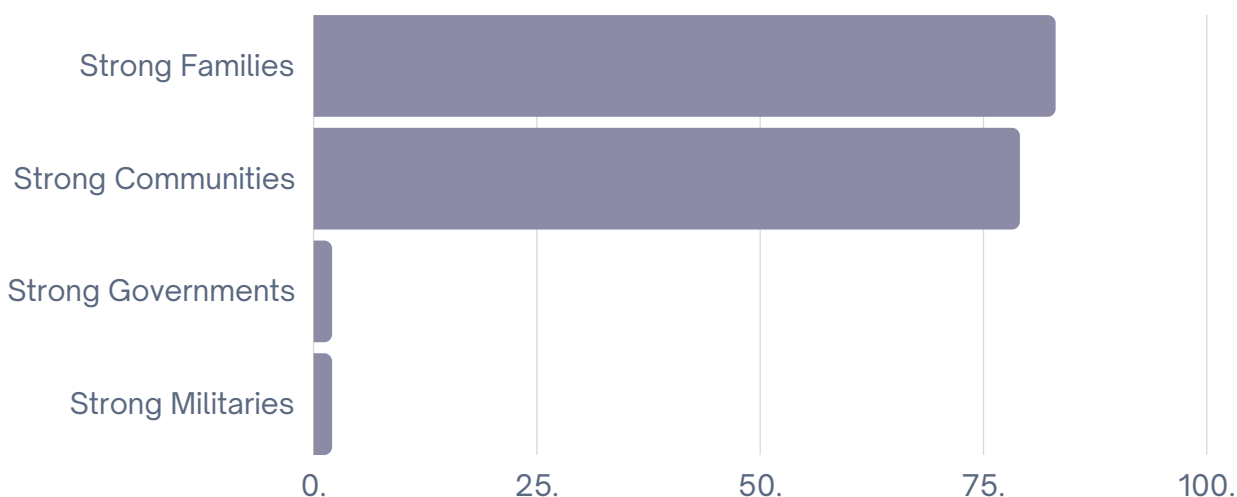
This section explores young adults' overall assessments of the role they play in society, the challenges they face, and the networks they draw on for support.



The varying sources of societal strength

While strong families are generally viewed by young adults as the most important things for a strong society, how they view their community matters, too. Most LDS young adults say strong families impact the strength of society the most (83%), followed by strong communities (79%). In contrast, equal shares believe that strong governments and militaries have the least important impact on the strength of a society (2% each).

Q6 What impacts the strength of a society most? (rank in order of importance)

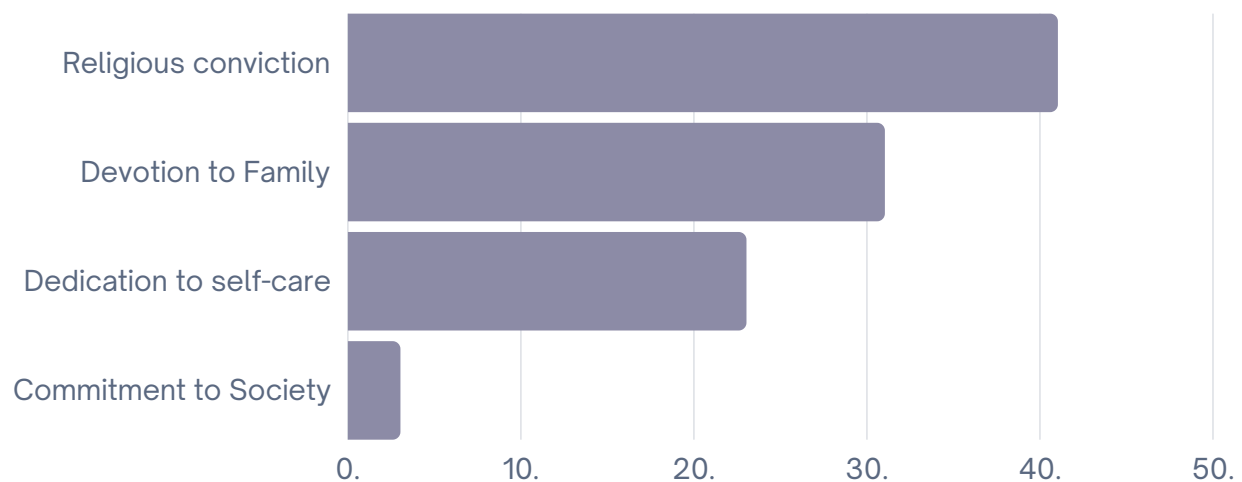


Four-in-ten say religion is the most important source of individual happiness

When asked about their views on the most important things that bring individual happiness, Latter-day Saint young adults describe a range of possibilities. Four-in-ten said that religious conviction is the most significant source for happiness (41%), while 31% say that devotion to family is the most important. Roughly a quarter of young adults place dedication to self-care relatively high on their list (23%), while few say commitment to society is important for individual happiness (3%).

A large share of young adults believe that strong families (83%) and strong communities (79%) are essential to the strength of a society as a whole. Yet, significantly smaller shares say that while these things are important to strong societies, their personal commitment to family (31%) and community (3%) are less central or important to their individual happiness.

**Q18 Which of the following, is most important for individual happiness?
(rank in order of importance)**



CHAPTER END NOTES:

[3] The family proclamation paragraphs addressed in this section are [Paragraph 8](#): "We warn that the disintegration of the family will bring upon individuals, communities, and nations the calamities foretold by ancient and modern prophets" and [Paragraph 9](#): "We call upon responsible citizens and officers of government everywhere to promote those measures designed to maintain and strengthen the family as the fundamental unit of society."

3

CHILDREN: PARENTAL IMPACT, RESPONSIBILITIES AND ROLES⁴

Children and childrearing are important for Latter-day Saint young adults. A majority say that overpopulation is not a source of apprehension for them, and over half are not concerned at all about the earth being unable to sustain its population. At the same time, nearly all young adults say that parents should provide the necessities of life to their children, including giving them religious and moral education.

Most Latter-day Saint young adults also express concern over the lasting impact of divorce on children. Among those surveyed, seven-in-ten firmly believe that the dissolution of a marriage negatively impacts children on a long-term basis.

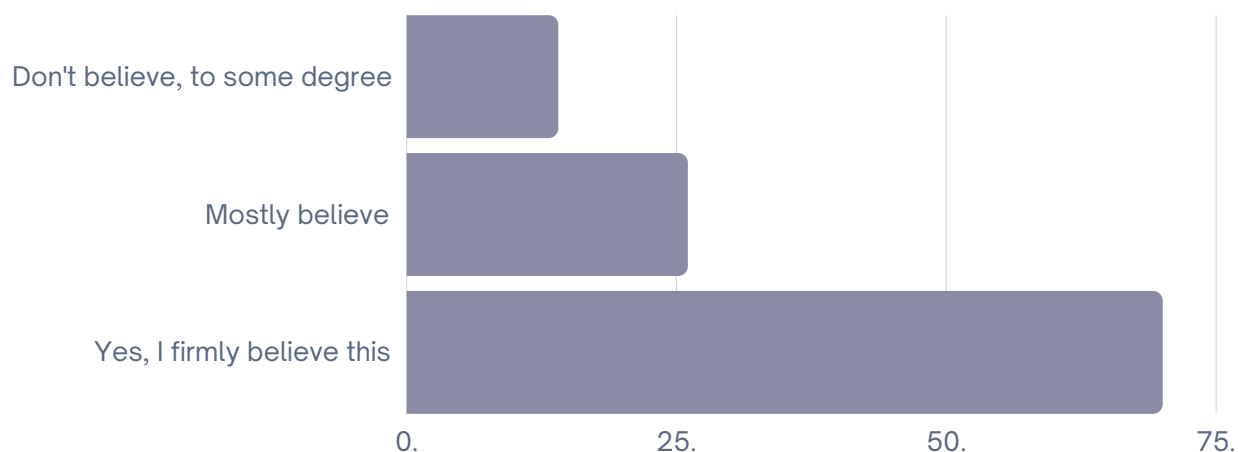
This section explores young adults' views on parenting and children, as well as the differing gender roles between mothers and fathers. It also looks at young adults' approaches to parental rights and responsibilities, including the roles that extended family and church play when needed.



Most young adults still believe a married mother and father are best for childrearing

Despite the changes over the past half century in the social conversations on gender roles and the decline in numbers of children being raised in a two-parent home, most Latter-day Saint young adults say that a married mother and father provide the ideal environment for raising children. Seven-in-ten say traditional gender roles of a married mother and father are best for kids, including 45% who firmly believe this and an additional 26% who believe this most of the time. Still, roughly 14% express disagreement, in varying levels, that a married mother and father provide the best environment for raising children: 7% firmly, 3% mostly, and 4% somewhat disagree.

Q24 Does divorce or dissolution of a committed relationship have a lasting impact on children?



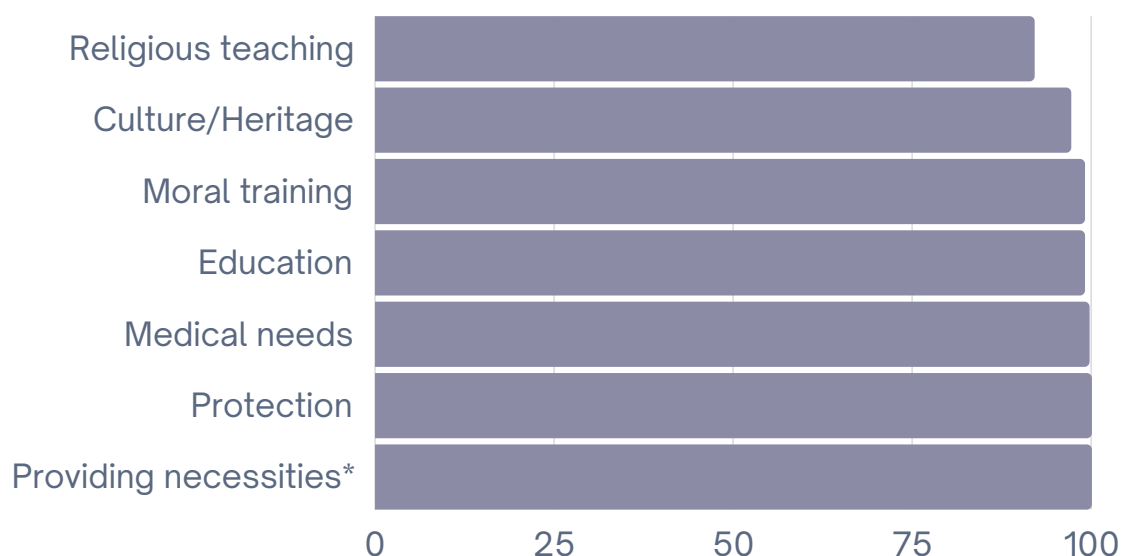
Do adult relationships affect children?

Latter-day Saint young adults care a lot about the impact divorce or relationship dissolution has on children. Nearly three quarters of young adults firmly believe that the breakdown of adult relationships has a lasting impact on children (72%), while 18% say they believe this most of the time, and only 9% somewhat believe this. Still, they tend to firmly agree on one point—none of respondents surveyed say they believe divorce has no lasting impact on children.

Parental rights and responsibilities are overwhelmingly important

When it comes to protecting, teaching, and caring for children, young adults are in near total agreement on parents' duties and rights. 100% of survey respondents say that parents should provide the necessities of life and protection for their children, with only very slight differences in how they see moral training, education, and heritage. In one key area, the responsibility of parents teaching religion to their children was lower than other answers (92%), when compared to parental responsibilities in providing the necessities of life (100%), medical needs (99.68%), moral training (99.04%), education (99.04%), culture and heritage (97.12%), and physical protection (100%).

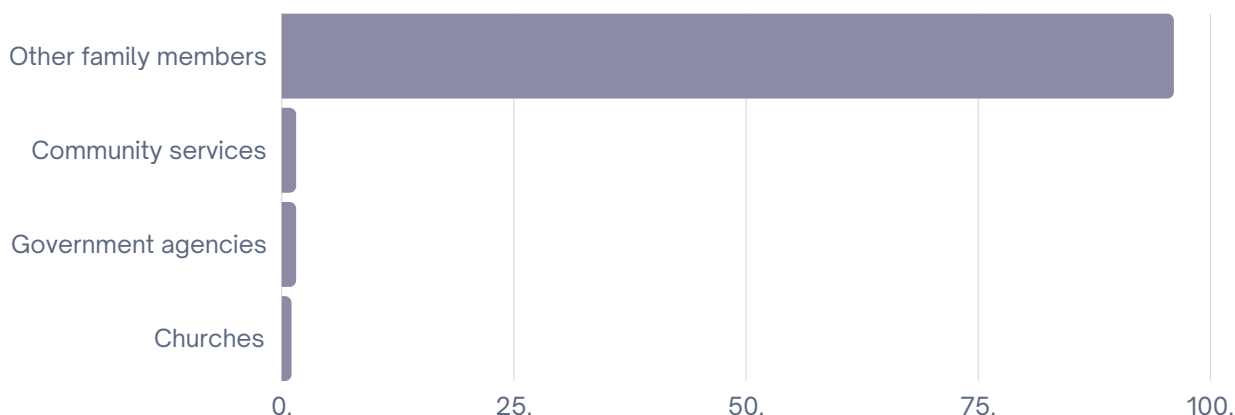
Q25 Do you believe parents have responsibility and rights regarding their children that include: (check all that apply)



Who should assist parents?

Very few Latter-day Saint young adults say parents should seek help with their children outside of their immediate family if they are unable to do so. Equal and shares of only about 2% say that the government agencies or community services should be the primary source for assistance, while even fewer say they would rely on churches. Young adults also overwhelmingly believe that other family members should assist in helping care for children when parents are unable or unwilling to do so themselves (96%).

**Q26 If parents are unable/unwilling to meet these responsibilities, who primarily should assist?
(rank in order of importance)**



Most young adults say overpopulation is not a concern

The majority of Latter-day Saint young adults say that the overpopulation of the earth does not concern them at all or most of the time (68%). 17% express varying levels of concern, while about one-in-ten say they are neutral on the subject (11%).

CHAPTER END NOTES:

[4] The family proclamation paragraphs addressed in this section are Paragraph 4: "We declare that God's commandment for His children to multiply and replenish the earth remains in force. We further declare that God has commanded that the sacred powers of procreation are to be employed only between man and woman, lawfully wedded as husband and wife," Paragraph 6: "Parents have a sacred duty to rear their children in love and righteousness, to provide for their physical and spiritual ... Husbands and wives—mothers and fathers—will be held accountable before God for the discharge of these obligations," Paragraph 7: "Children are entitled to birth within the bonds of matrimony, and to be reared by a father and a mother who honor marital vows with complete fidelity. Happiness in family life is most likely to be achieved when founded upon the teachings of the Lord Jesus Christ. ... By divine design, fathers are to preside over their families in love and righteousness and are responsible to provide the necessities of life and protection for their families. Mothers are primarily responsible for the nurture of their children. In these sacred responsibilities, fathers and mothers are obligated to help one another as equal partners. Disability, death, or other circumstances may necessitate individual adaptation. Extended families should lend support when needed" and Paragraph 8: "We warn that individuals who violate covenants of chastity, who abuse spouse or offspring, or who fail to fulfill family responsibilities will one day stand accountable before God."

4

SHARING VIEWS ON MARRIAGE AND FAMILY IN THE PUBLIC SQUARE⁵

When it comes to Latter-day Saint young adults sharing their beliefs on marriage and family online or in public, they are more likely to say it is acceptable for others to talk about marriage online, but half as likely to be very confident doing so themselves.

They have concerns and challenges with discussing the topic of marriage. A quarter of young adults have some level of discomfort and uncertainty in sharing their views on marriage in the public square.

However, their personal level of discomfort and uncertainty drops significantly when others share their beliefs about marriage publicly.

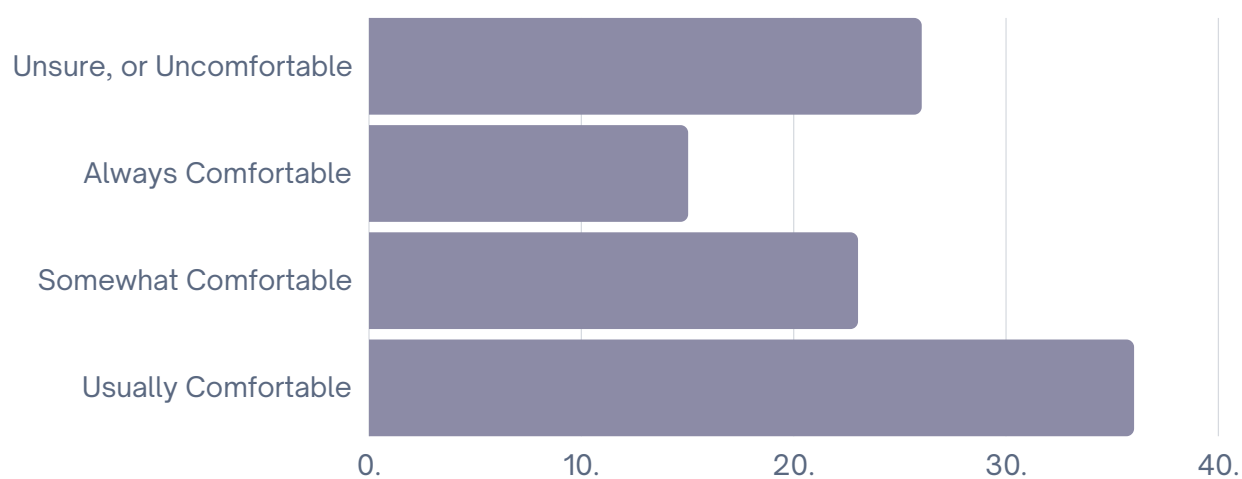
This section explores young adults' overall assessments of their comfort levels in talking about marriage and family in the public square, as well as their hesitancy in doing so.



Young adults have mixed levels of comfort when sharing personal views about marriage

Most Latter-day Saint young adults say they have at least some level of comfort when sharing their ideas about marriage publicly; however, only a small number expressing full confidence in doing so. For example, 15% of young adults say they are always comfortable in sharing their personal views, while the remainder are usually comfortable (36%) or somewhat comfortable (23%). Conversely, one-in-four say they are unsure or uncomfortable with sharing their personal opinions about marriage in the public square (26%).

Q8 How comfortable are you sharing your ideas about family in public/online?



Most young adults feel it is more acceptable for others to publicly share their views on marriage, but are far less likely to do so themselves.

There is one area in which Latter-day Saint young adults stand out. For the most part, Latter-day Saint young adults believe it is okay for people talk about marriage online or in public: 29% say it is always acceptable and 45% say it is usually acceptable (74% total). However, they are far less confident doing so themselves. Only 15% report that they are always comfortable sharing their views about marriage, while 37% are usually comfortable doing so. Conversely, one in five young adults say they have at some discomfort in personally sharing their views on marriage.

Young adults are more likely to say they're comfortable sharing views about family than about marriage

Latter-day Saint young adults generally feel that they can share their feelings about family to some degree: 21% say they are always comfortable, 39% are usually comfortable, and an additional 25% say they are somewhat comfortable. However, when it comes to the subject of marriage, their confidence levels begin to drop. Among those young adults who expressed the highest levels of confidence in publicly sharing their views on family (21%), the same are less likely to feel at ease talking about the subject of marriage (15%).



CHAPTER END NOTES:

[5] The family proclamation paragraph addressed in this section is Paragraph 9: "We call upon responsible citizens and officers of government everywhere to promote those measures designed to maintain and strengthen the family as the fundamental unit of society."

5

BELIEF IN GOD, THE AFTERLIFE, AND EVOLUTION⁶

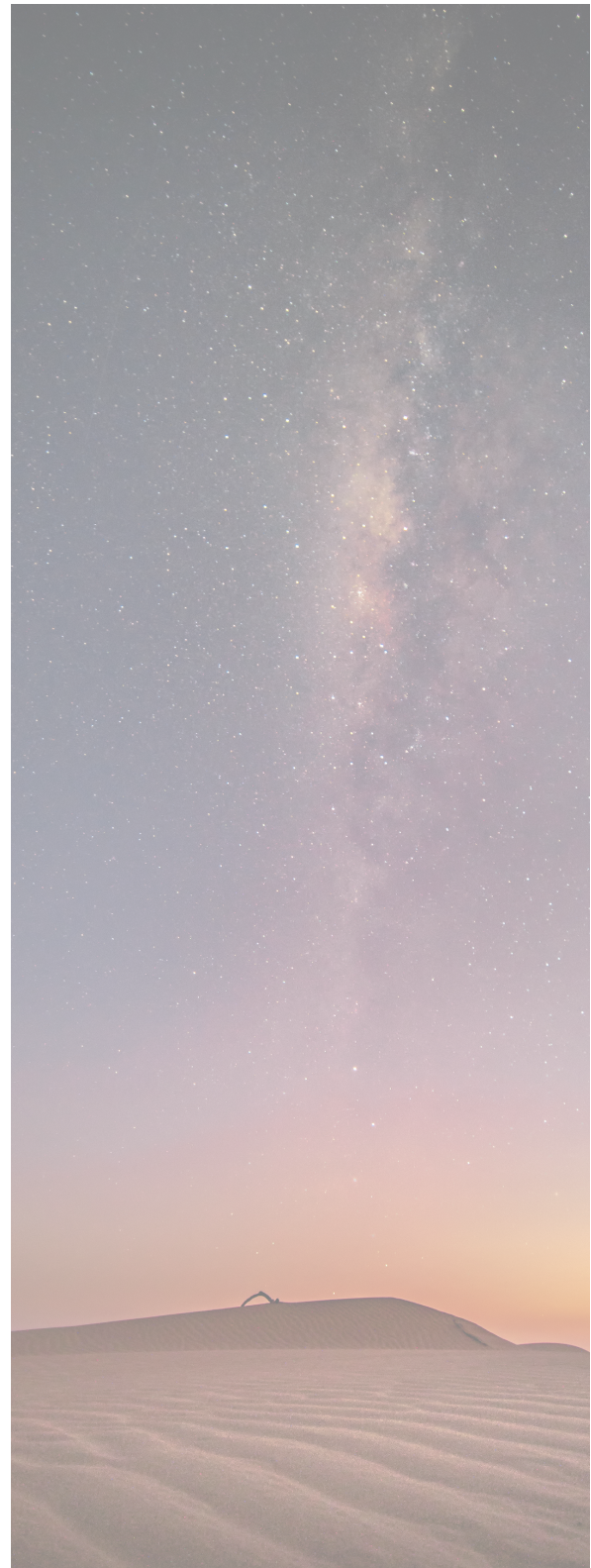
High belief in God and the afterlife

Overall, the vast majority of Latter-day Saint young adults say they believe in God (93%) and that associations with family and friends will continue in the afterlife (90%).

Young adults have mixed views about evolution

Most Latter-day Saint young adults believe they were created by God (91%), but they have a range of ideas about evolution. Half are firm in their belief that human beings do not evolve from lower life species (50%) while the others expressed some degree of ambiguity or disagreement on the topic. 18% say they mostly or somewhat disagree with evolution and 8% remained neutral. Still, about a quarter (24%) of young adults, in vary degrees, say they believe that humans evolved from a lower life species.

[6] The family proclamation paragraphs addressed in this section are Paragraph 2: "All human beings—male and female—are created in the image of God. Each is a beloved spirit son or daughter of heavenly parents, and, as such, each has a divine nature and destiny. Gender is an essential characteristic of individual premortal, mortal, and eternal identity and purpose" and Paragraph 3: "In the premortal realm, spirit sons and daughters knew and worshipped God as their Eternal Father and accepted His plan by which His children could obtain a physical body and gain earthly experience to progress toward perfection and ultimately realize their divine destiny as heirs of eternal life. The divine plan of happiness enables family relationships to be perpetuated beyond the grave. Sacred ordinances and covenants available in holy temples make it possible for individuals to return to the presence of God and for families to be united eternally."



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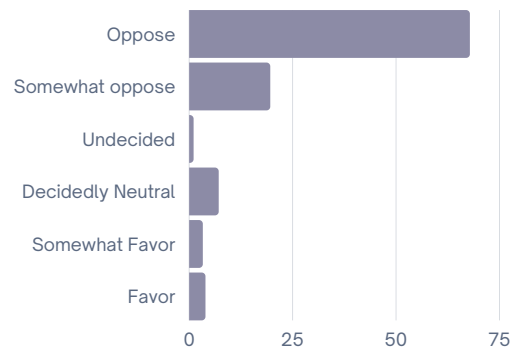
MORAL ISSUES OF LIFE AND DEATH⁷

With the complicated social changes occurring in the lives of Latter-day Saint young adults, the survey provides insight into how they view complex moral issues. When it comes to abortion, the majority say they oppose it. Most Latter-day Saint young adults also overwhelmingly favor adoption. However, when it comes to other issues such as euthanasia, the death penalty, and surrogacy, the survey finds their responses vary in significant ways. The following section addresses these differences and can illustrate understanding of doctrine and policy on a variety of issues.



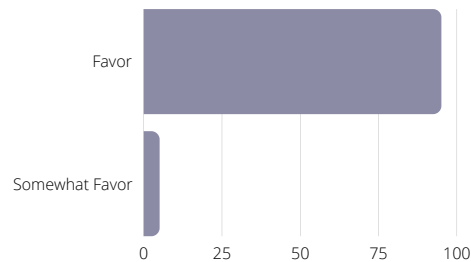
Abortion

Most Latter-day Saint young adults say they oppose (68%) or somewhat oppose (19%) abortion. Far fewer young adults are decidedly neutral (7%), and a very small minority somewhat favor (3%) or favor (4%) abortion.



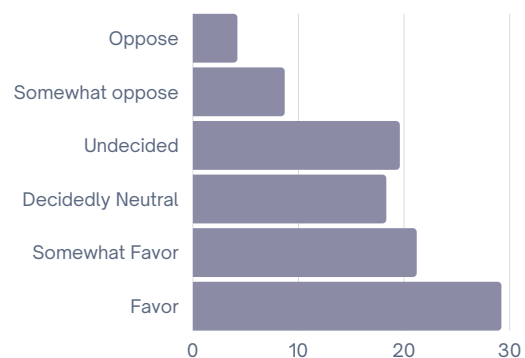
Adoption

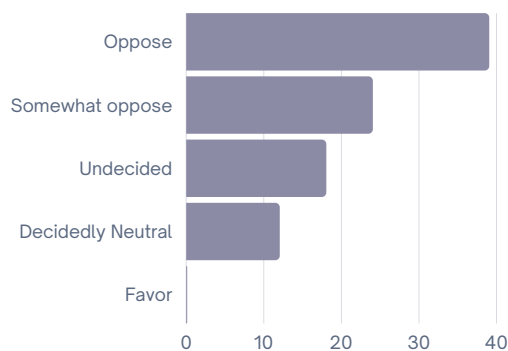
The overwhelming majority of Latter-day saint young adults say they support adoption (95%), while the remaining 5% say they somewhat favor it.



Surrogacy

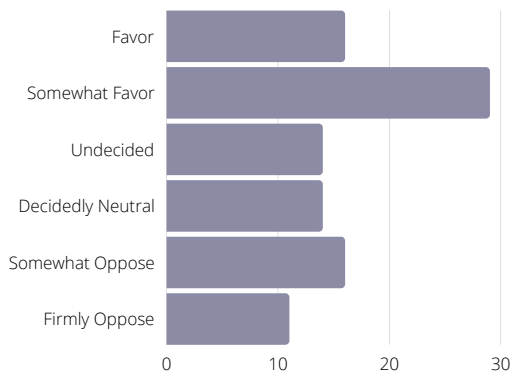
When asked about their views on surrogacy, Latter-day Saints describe a range of opinions. One-third of young adults (29%) say they favor surrogacy, while an additional 21% say they somewhat favor it. Smaller shares of survey participants say they are neutral (18%) and one-in-five say they are undecided (20%). Fewer than one-in-ten somewhat oppose surrogacy (9%) and even smaller numbers more firmly oppose it (4%).





Euthanasia - Physician Assisted Suicide

Latter-day Saint young adults generally feel that euthanasia is wrong, but they still have mixed feelings about it; 39% say they oppose the practice, and an additional 24% say they somewhat oppose it. Still, roughly one-in-five (18%) are undecided and 12% are decidedly neutral.



Death Penalty

Latter-day Saint young adults have a wide range of feelings about the death penalty and express varying levels of certainty over the issue; 16% are in favor and 29% are somewhat in favor of the practice. Still, an equal share of young adults say they are either decidedly neutral or undecided (14% each). By contrast, 16% Latter-day Saints somewhat oppose the death penalty and 11% more firmly oppose it..

CHAPTER END NOTES:

[7] The family proclamation paragraphs addressed in this section is Paragraph 5: "We declare the means by which mortal life is created to be divinely appointed. We affirm the sanctity of life and of its importance in God's eternal plan."

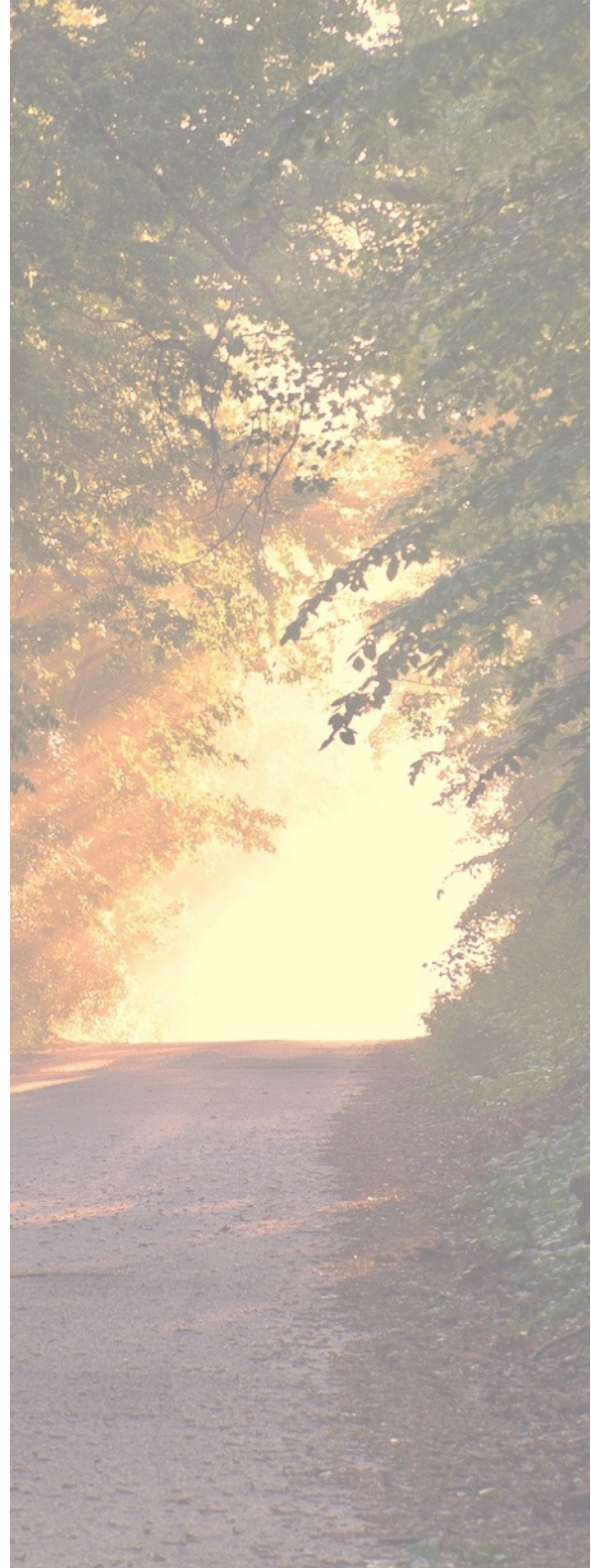


WHAT IS TRUTH AND THE IMPACT OF MORAL RELATIVISM⁸

Most Latter-day Saint young adults say they believe in absolute truth, but the survey findings paint a mixed portrait when it comes to what they perceive is true for others. Belief on whether truth differs for each person based on context, culture, perspective, and life experience varies markedly across young adults. Some young adults clearly face more challenges than others in their understanding of truth.

Overall, the majority of Latter-day Saint young adults say that they believe in absolute truth. But at the same time, one-in-three still have uncertainty themselves, and even more are unsure if the truths they believe in can be applied to other people. Young adults have varying responses about the ways they can know what truth is and who to turn to when seeking out sources of truth.

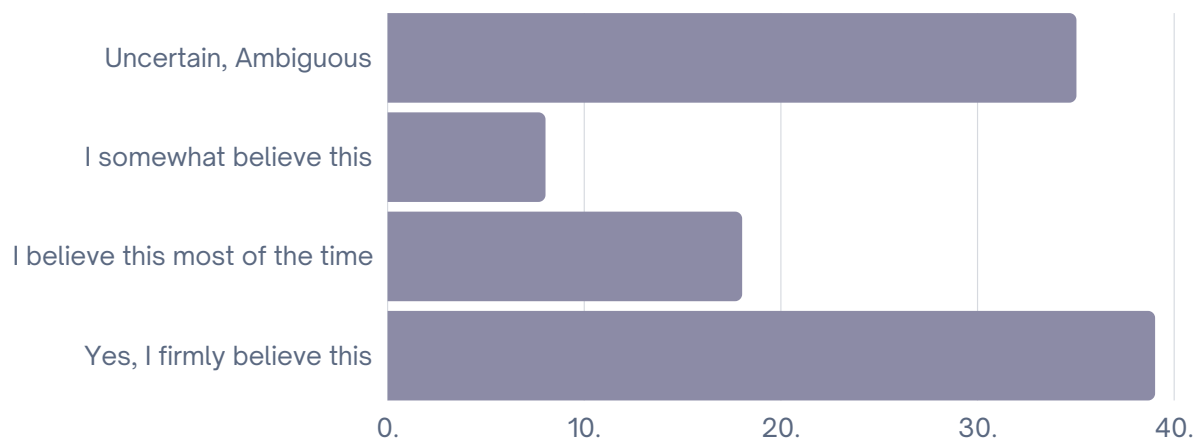
This section addresses young adult beliefs in fixed principles and truths, the ways they believe truth can be found, and the different ways in which they view right and wrong in this context.



Most young adults believe in absolute truth, but still have uncertainty

Latter-day Saint young adults generally believe that truths that are fixed and absolute (65%). In contrast, roughly one-in-three (35%) of young adults expressed varying levels of uncertainty or ambiguity in their belief that truths are fixed, absolute, and independent of individual feelings.

Q10 Do you believe there are truths that are fixed, absolute, and independent of individual feelings?

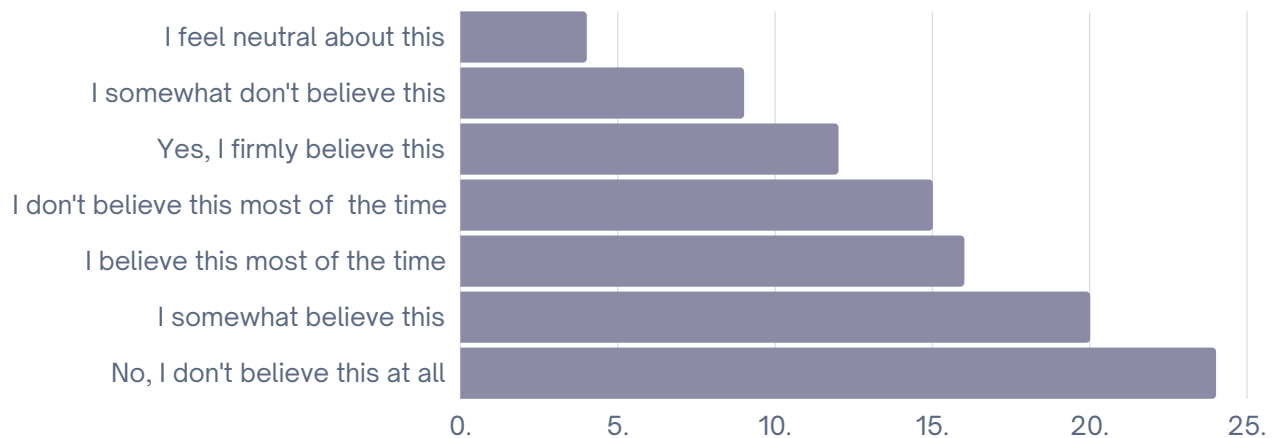


Young adults have mixed views about whether truth is the same for everyone

The question of whether truth can be the same for everyone varies markedly across Latter-day Saint young adults. About a quarter (24%) firmly say that truth is absolute, regardless of a person's culture, perspective, life experience, or context, while equal shares somewhat or mostly believe this (24% each), with a minority expressing neutrality on the subject (4%).

Still, fully one-in-five say they disagree that truth applies to everyone: 20% somewhat believe truth is different for each person, 16% believe this most of the time, and 12% strongly believe this view. While most Latter-day Saint young adults say they personally believe in absolute truth (65%), they are far less likely to say it is universal for everyone (24%).

Q29 Do you believe truth is different for each person, based on context, culture, perspective and life experience?



35%

expressed varying levels of uncertainty or ambiguity in their belief that truths are fixed, absolute, and independent of individual feelings.

Most young adults say truth is complicated

When asked to provide additional responses, their open-ended answers about truth describe a range of views, such as:

“

“I find truth to be a little nuanced. There are absolute truths that will not change and stand independent of our acknowledgement of them. But, there are relative truths (more like application of truths) that work well for me and produce different results for different people.”

”

“

“I believe the Church is true. I believe in absolute truths in the Church. However, at the same time, that belief is also subjective because it's not truth for every person on this earth, meaning, in another person's reality, it's not true for them.”

”

“

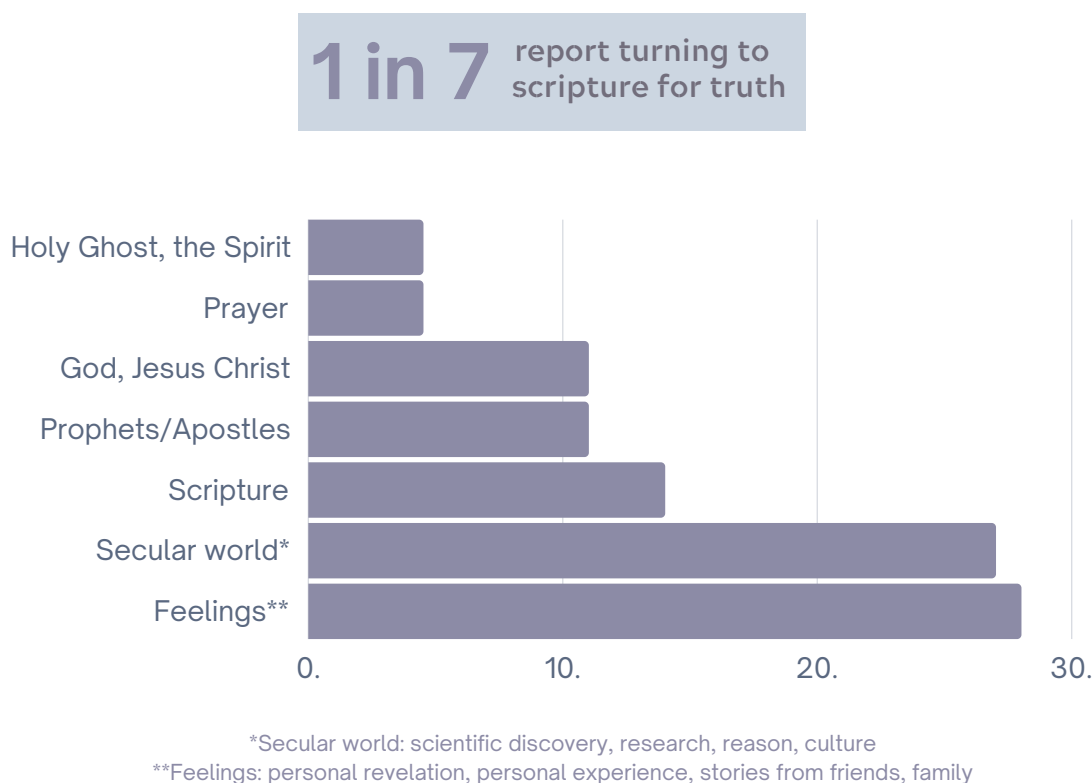
“(A)bortion: in my personal life I don't agree with it. However, I'm not against it in the lives of others if it is what is best for them. I don't feel like I can say what's right for someone else on a topic like this!”

”

Where do Latter-day Saint young adults turn for truth?

While the majority of Latter-day Saint young adults say they believe in absolute truth, their views on how to find truth varies significantly. 28% say they find truth through their feelings, which include personal revelation, personal experiences, and the emotional responses they get from stories shared by friends or family members. 27% say they find truth in the secular world, which includes scientific discovery, reason, research, or culture.

Other considerable differences stand out among Latter-day Saint young adults: one-in-seven responses report turning to scripture for truth (14%). Smaller, but equal shares of responses report turning to God and Jesus Christ (11%) and prophets, apostles, and modern revelation (11%). Even fewer responses indicate turning to the Holy Ghost and the spirit as a means of finding truth (5%).



CHAPTER END NOTES:

[8] The family proclamation paragraph addressed in this section is Paragraph 1: "We, the First Presidency and the Council of the Twelve Apostles of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, solemnly proclaim ..." in order to test belief in prophetic authority and truth.

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METHODOLOGY

Full methodology available upon request.