

New research on Christian school graduates yields surprising results

May 25 2011

In the first study of its kind on K-12 Christian education in North America, University of Notre Dame sociologist David Sikkink, in partnership with Cardus – a public policy think tank – found that while Protestant Christian school graduates show uncommon commitment to their families and churches, donate more money than graduates of other schools, and divorce less, they also have lower incomes, less education, and are less engaged in politics than their Catholic and non-religious private school peers.

The two-year study surveyed a representative sample of religious school graduates in the U.S. (ages 24 to 39) to determine the impact of Christian schools on adults in today's society as well as understand how Christian schools are attempting to define themselves in today's socio-cultural and economic landscape. The research team also sampled more than 150 Catholic and Protestant school administrators in Canada and the U.S. to assess the aspirations of Christian schools.

Also among the findings:

- In addition to divorcing less, Protestant Christian school graduates are having more children than their Catholic and non-religious private school peers;
- Protestant Christian school graduates participate in more relief and development service trips than their Catholic and non-

religious private school peers;

- Protestant Christian school graduates were more thankful for what they have in life;
- Protestant Christian school graduates attend less competitive colleges than Catholic and non-religious private school peers;
- Protestant Christian school graduates are not engaging in higher education any more than their public school peers;
- Protestant Christian school graduates talk less about politics, participate less in political campaigns and donate less to political causes than their Catholic and non-religious private school peers;
- Graduates of Catholic and non-religious private schools have a significant advantage in the number of years of education;
- More Catholic school administrators ranked university as the top priority, while more Protestant school administrators ranked family as the top emphasis of the school.

Preliminary results of the study will be presented Wednesday (May 25) at the Willard Hotel in Washington, D.C., where representatives of Cardus and lead researcher Sikkink will discuss the study's findings.

Provided by University of Notre Dame

Citation: New research on Christian school graduates yields surprising results (2011, May 25) retrieved 28 April 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2011-05-christian-school-yields-results.html>

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