



# CIRCLE

The Center for Information & Research  
on Civic Learning & Engagement

For Immediate Release:  
April 5, 2007

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## **Do Easter Services Motivate Kids to Vote?**

### **Young People Who Regularly Attend Religious Services are Politically & Civically More Active, More Likely to Vote**

College Park, MD – As millions of Americans observe Easter and Passover, new research shows that young people who attend religious services are more likely to vote and volunteer, according to data released by The Center for Information & Research on Civic Learning & Engagement (CIRCLE) at the University of Maryland.

The research found that 36 percent of young people between ages 20 and 25 who attend religious services at least once a week reported that they voted regularly, while only 21 percent who attend services a few times a year and 20 percent who never attend services voted regularly. The data also showed that those who attend religious services regularly are more likely than their counterparts to belong to groups involved in politics, display a campaign button or sign, and donate money to candidates or a party.

The same trend appeared for “civic” or “community” activities. In 2006, 40 percent of young people who attend religious services regularly said they volunteered in the last 12 months, while 37 percent of infrequent religious service attendees and only 29 percent who did not attend religious services reported volunteering during that same time period. Furthermore, those same young people were more likely to be *regular* volunteers (25 percent) compared with those who are infrequent service attendees (17 percent) and non-attendees (11 percent). A fact sheet on frequency of religious attendance and civic engagement among youth ages 15 to 25 can be found at [www.civicyouth.org](http://www.civicyouth.org).

According to the research, which included respondents from a variety of denominations, attendance at religious services among young people is similar to that of adults. Approximately 40 percent of 15- to 25-year-olds attend religious services regularly while the rest are split equally between the categories of infrequent attendees and those who never attend.

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“We are reminded during these important religious observances that religions have always been catalysts for their followers to perform some type of service in their communities, or across the world. Our research shows that this tradition continues with today’s youth,” said Peter Levine, executive director of CIRCLE. “Today, our young people who regularly attend church, synagogue or the mosque are involved in social causes such as hunger and homelessness, and in civic activities like voting, boycotts and raising money for charities.”

The research is based on *The 2006 National Civic and Political Health Survey*, which was conducted from April 27 to June 11, 2006. The survey sampled 1,700 young people ages 15 to 25, and 550 adults ages 26 and older. The Pew Charitable Trusts funded this survey.

CIRCLE (The Center for Information and Research on Civic Learning and Engagement) promotes research on the civic and political engagement of Americans between the ages of 15 and 25. Since 2001, CIRCLE has conducted, collected and funded research on the civic and political participation of young Americans. CIRCLE is based in the University of Maryland’s School of Public Policy and is funded by The Pew Charitable Trusts, the Carnegie Corporation of New York and other organizations.