

Powerful Parenting for June 15 2022

We hope you find this information useful, inspiring, challenging, helpful, sobering, insightful, etc. If you want to be added or taken off this list, just let us know. If you know someone who could benefit from it, pass it along. If you have any comments, concerns, want to be added or deleted from this list, e-mail david@claytonbaptistchurch.com.

Belief in God Drops

The vast majority of U.S. adults believe in God, but the 81% who do so is down six percentage points from 2017 and is the lowest in Gallup's trend. Between 1944 and 2011, more than 90% of Americans believed in God. Gallup first asked this question in 1944, repeating it again in 1947 and twice each in the 1950s and 1960s. In those latter four surveys, a consistent 98% said they believed in God. When Gallup asked the question nearly five decades later, in 2011, 92% of Americans said they believed in God.

A subsequent survey in 2013 found belief in God dipping below 90% to 87%, roughly where it stood in three subsequent updates between 2014 and 2017 before this year's drop to 81%. Gallup has also in recent years asked other questions aimed at measuring belief in God or a higher power. All find the vast majority of Americans saying they believe; when given the option, 5% to 10% have said they were "unsure."

Belief in God has fallen the most in recent years among young adults and people on the left of the political spectrum (liberals and Democrats). These groups show drops of 10 or more percentage points comparing the 2022 figures to an average of the 2013-2017 polls. Most other key subgroups have experienced at least a modest decline, although conservatives and married adults have had essentially no change.

The groups with the largest declines are also the groups that are currently least likely to believe in God, including liberals (62%), young adults (68%) and Democrats (72%). Belief in God is highest among political conservatives (94%) and Republicans (92%), reflecting that religiosity is a major determinant of political divisions in the U.S.

A follow-up question in the survey probed further into what Americans' belief in God entails. Specifically, the question asked whether God hears prayers and whether God intervenes when people pray. About half of those who believe in God -- equal to 42% of all Americans -- say God hears prayers and can intervene on a person's behalf. Meanwhile, 28% of all Americans say God hears prayers but cannot intervene, while 11% think God does neither.

Nearly three-quarters of the most religious Americans, defined as those who attend religious services every week, say they believe God hears prayers and can intervene, as do slightly more than half of conservatives and Republicans, as well as 25% of liberals and 32% of Democrats. Thirty percent of young adults believe God hears prayers and can intervene.

Bottom Line? Fewer Americans today than five years ago believe in God, and the percentage is down even more from the 1950s and 1960s when almost all Americans did. Still, the vast majority of Americans believe in God, whether that means they believe a higher power hears prayers and can intervene or not. And while belief in God has declined in recent years, Gallup has documented steeper drops in church attendance, church membership and confidence in organized religion, suggesting that the practice of religious faith may be changing more than basic faith in God.

www.news.gallup.com

The Hidden Language of Online Drug Culture

With the recent death of a teen in California who got fentanyl-laced drugs online, parents want to know if their kids are part of the secret online drug culture. The truth is that teens are buying drugs via popular social media platforms and text messaging, often right under their parents'

noses. The drugs are even being delivered right to teens door. Experts are decoding the secret terms and emojis used in deals that can be deadly.

According to the National Institute on Drug Abuse, fentanyl is “a powerful synthetic opioid that is similar to morphine but is 50 to 100 times more potent.” According to a May research letter published in JAMA, the overdose death rate for adolescents almost doubled in 2020, then rose by an additional 20 percent in 2021. As reported by NBC News, many of those deaths stemmed from fentanyl.

Last year, the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration released a parental guide to deciphering the "Emoji Drug Code," a graphic bearing popular symbols repurposed for drug deals. For example, a pill emoji symbolizes drugs like Percocet, Adderall, or Oxycodone, heroin is depicted with a snake or a brown heart and cocaine is a snowflake. The emblem for marijuana is palm or pine tree. And dealers indicate large batches of drugs with a cookie symbol while high-potency substances are represented with bomb or rocket emojis.

"Fake prescription pills, commonly laced with deadly fentanyl and methamphetamine, are often sold on social media and e-commerce platforms," the federal agency warns. "The word 'plug' means 'hook me up' with drugs," Feinberg told TODAY Parents. And misspelled words like "pilz" (pills), "xanax" (Xanax), "cush" (marijuana) facilitate open discussion without triggering social media safeguards, he said.

Five years ago, Feinberg created a fake Instagram account to follow and exchange direct messages with suspected drug dealers. He showed TODAY advertisements for popular exercise equipment, a major streaming service, children's entertainment and fast food. Andrew Sussman, CEO of the Institute for Advertising Ethics, said advertisers risk ads running alongside drug-related content. "There's no perfect filter," he told Snow.

In response to TODAY's request for comment, a spokesperson from Snapchat told TODAY: *"We explicitly prohibit any activity related to illicit drug sales on Snapchat, and we are determined to bring all our resources to bear to make our platform a hostile environment for drug dealers. We use cutting edge technologies to proactively detect this type of content so we can shut down dealers' accounts and block them from trying to create new ones. We also work with drug enforcement agencies, and with third-party intelligence experts that scan other platforms for illicit drug content that references Snapchat, so we can take swift action to find and ban those dealers' accounts."*

Additionally, an Instagram spokesperson said in a statement: *"We prohibit the sale of illicit drugs on Instagram and have developed technology to find and remove this content proactively. In 2022, we actioned on 1.8 million pieces of drug content, of which 96% was proactively detected before anyone reported it to us. We have disabled the accounts in question and will continue making improvements to keep people safe on Instagram."*

SEE DIAGRAM NEXT PAGE!



EMOJI DRUG CODE | DECODED

COMMON EMOJI CODES

FAKE PRESCRIPTION DRUGS

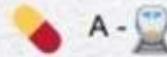
PERCOCET & OXYCODONE



XANAX



ADDERALL



DEALER SIGNALS

DEALER ADVERTISING



HIGH POTENCY



UNIVERSAL FOR DRUGS



LARGE BATCH



OTHER DRUGS

METH



HEROIN



COCAINE



MDMA & MOLLIES



MUSHROOMS



COUGH SYRUP



MARIJUANA



This reference guide is intended to give parents, caregivers, educators, and other influencers a better sense of how emojis are being used in conjunction with illegal drugs. Fake prescription pills, commonly laced with deadly fentanyl and methamphetamine, are often sold on social media and e-commerce platforms – making them available to anyone with a smartphone.

