

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

**Q: The National Campaign to Prevent Teen & Unplanned Pregnancy’s poll says that 80 percent of unmarried evangelicals have had sex. The NAE poll says 44 percent have had sex. Why the discrepancy?**

A: The difference is primarily accounted for by the variety of ways polling organizations define “evangelical.” For example, Barna Group bases their definition exclusively on a series of specific beliefs. Baylor University makes the determination based primarily on the participant’s denomination affiliation. Others, including Gallup, Pew, and the study conducted by The National Campaign to Prevent Teen & Unplanned Pregnancy usually use self-identification as a “born again or evangelical Christian.”

This study for the NAE represents the attitudes and opinions of Millennials who attend a Protestant church once a month, believe they will go to heaven when they die, because they have accepted Jesus Christ as their Savior, and strongly hold these statements:

- o The Bible is the written word of God and is accurate in all that it teaches
- o You have made a personal commitment to Jesus Christ that is still important in your life today
- o Eternal salvation is possible only through Jesus Christ
- o You, personally, have a responsibility to tell other people about your religious beliefs

It is to be expected that the findings may differ (in some cases substantially) from research that represents other age groups, and/or from research that defines “evangelical” differently.

**Q: What is the difference between the two polls that the NAE commissioned on this topic – one by Gallup and one by Grey Matter?**

A: The Gallup poll, which was conducted in the summer of 2009, was designed to get an overview of the general thoughts regarding sexual activity, abortion and unexpected pregnancies of evangelicals ages 18-95. For this poll, Gallup identified evangelicals by denominational affiliation, church attendance at least once a month, accepting Jesus Christ as Savior and affirming the Bible as the written word of God and a guide for life.

The Grey Matter poll, which was conducted in May 2012, was more specific in that it only polled 18-29 year olds and asked more questions on Millennials’ behaviors and thoughts regarding sexual activity and unexpected pregnancies. Grey Matter used a more specific definition of evangelicals as noted in the previous question.

**Q: Did you ask whether respondents had abortions or struggle with same-sex attraction or pornography?**

A: No. The topics covered in this survey are deeply personal. The more specific and personal the questions are, the more likely participants will conclude their participation before completing the full survey. We wanted to focus very specifically on the sexual practices and beliefs of unmarried evangelicals that might lead to unexpected pregnancies and abortions.

**Q: How was “contraception” defined in the study?**

A: For the purposes of this study, respondents were informed that the terms “contraception” or “contraceptives” refer to any form of artificial birth control, including barrier methods (such as condoms) and hormonal methods (such as birth control pills or patches), or any other forms used by either males or females. It does not include “natural” methods of birth control, such as the “rhythm method,” withdrawal, etc. This definition was available to respondents throughout all the questions regarding the topic.

**Q: How was “sexual activity” defined?**

A: Sexual activity was not defined for the participants of the study. The more specific and personal the questions are, the more likely participants will conclude their participation before completing the full survey. Therefore, we did not ask participants to identify whether they had participated in specific sexual activities. It is possible that some will interpret “sexually active” as something other than “ever had sex.” Of course had the questions asked whether people had ever had sex, then the semantics would be what constitutes “sex.”

**Q: Is there more data from the poll that was not included in the press release/s?**

A: Yes. More data from the poll is available on our website at <http://www.nae.net/church-and-faith-partners/projects/generation-forum/polling>. The poll information is being released through a series of press releases with supplemental statistics available on the NAE website.

**Q: What is the NAE going to do to address these issues?**

A: The NAE has long been committed to safeguarding and respecting the intrinsic value of every human life. After hearing from others about the high rate of evangelicals who are having sex and abortions, we wanted to learn and do more. The NAE has created multiple resources for churches and pastors, including the *Theology of Sex* document, a [Pastoral Resource Packet](#), and [videos](#), and hosted multiple discussions with key leaders. We hope this polling and other resources will spur new engagement by evangelicals to address the complex issue of abortions among us.