



## The Polls Show That America Is Losing Its Moral Compass

John Grimaldi

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WASHINGTON, DC, June 22 — Once upon a time Americans adhered to a moral code. Doing the right thing based on that code unified us, made us stronger and defined our nation. However, somehow, somewhere we lost our way. The polls show that virtue is losing its allure. A new survey by the Gallup organization, for example, found that a record 50% of us believe that we're losing our moral compass. They feel that "the overall state of moral values in the U.S." is poor and that "another 37% say it is only fair, at best.

According to Gallup, "Not only are Americans feeling grim about the current state of moral values in the nation, but they are also mostly pessimistic about the future on the subject, as 78% say morals are getting worse and just 18% getting better. The latest percentage saying moral values are getting worse is roughly in line with the average of 74% since 2002, but it is well above the past two years' 67% and 68% readings."

Republicans are particularly conscious of the growing immorality of Americans. Seventy-two percent of the respondents who identified as Republicans believe that the "poor rating of moral values is at its highest point since the inception of the trend and up sharply since [President] Trump left office."

So, how does one define moral decline? The Cato Institute calls it moral decay and says that "The growth of government has politicized life and weakened the nation's moral fabric. Government intervention—in the economy, in the community, and in society—has increased the payoff from political action and reduced the scope of private action. People have become more dependent on the state and have sacrificed freedom for a false sense of security... The most obvious signs of moral decay in America are the prevalence of out-of-wedlock births, the breakup of families, the amorality of public education, and the eruption of criminal activity. But there are other signs as well: the decline in civility, the lack of integrity in both public and private life, and the growth of litigation as the chief way to settle disputes."

Perhaps the decline of those among us who “have faith” and attend services has something to do with America’s moral decline, particularly among our younger generations. About ten years ago, a Marist poll showed that 52% of us were attending church services at least once a month. A new Marist poll shows that these days only about 40% of us attend church on the same basis. The new survey shows that 43% of respondents 60 years old or older said they go to services weekly. Likewise, 27% of those 45-to-49 years of age do, too, as do 25% of those 30-to-44 years old. Just 21% of 18 to 29-year-olds said they participate in religious services once a week.

And then there is the influence of social media on the moral development of younger Americans, in particular. Social media has become an essential for teens in America. Some surveys show that about 90% of youngsters between the ages of 13 and 17 are active on social media. And now a new report shows that “from 2019 to 2021 alone, media use grew by 17% for tweens and teens. On average, 8- to 12-year-olds use about five and a half hours of screen media per day, while 13- to 18-year-olds use about eight and a half hours of screen media,” says a Common Sense Media report published in March. And that’s plenty of time to get into mischief.

The burden of protecting children falls on their parents. The global information services company, **Experian, reminds us that our kids**, “are part of a generation that never knew what life was like before the internet. Since they’ll be online from a much younger age than you probably were, it’s important to teach them about the risks from a young age, including predators, scams and cyberbullying. As a parent, you can guide and supervise your kids as they navigate the ever-changing online landscape, making sure they are confident and safe as digital citizens.”

It is the invisible hands of government and social media that are steering Americans particularly young Americans away from the moral high ground we once had. It’s up to us as parents, grandparents, and citizens to hold the compass, to get back into society, to help others, return to your faith (even if it’s online). To care and help others during your daily journey. This is part of making America great again.