

## **More Call Family Time ‘Essential’**

While some expected changes in the post-Sept. 11 world haven't occurred, Americans are more apt to call it essential to spend time with their families – suggesting that the notion of a so-called “cocooning” effect has merit.

Seventy-eight percent in a new ABC News poll say spending time with their family is essential to them, significantly higher than the 60 percent who said so in a poll conducted in October 2000. This doesn't demonstrate causality – the notion that 9/11 is responsible – but it does suggest that Americans lately have grown more concerned with family time.

The sense that time with family is “essential” peaks at 91 percent among people with children under 12 at home, at 86 percent among women and at 85 percent among married people. It's still high, though, among people who don't have any children (74 percent call it “essential” to spend time with family); unmarrieds (71 percent) and men (70 percent).

	“Essential” to spend time with family
July 2002	78%
October 2000*	60
*Roper	

Some other predicted changes since Sept. 11 have not occurred, or have moderated. For example, the number of Americans who say religion is very important to them, or who say they attend church on a weekly basis, is essentially the same now as before Sept. 11. Self-reported depression or sleeplessness spiked, but then fell sharply in the weeks after the attacks.

Some basic political measures, such as views of waste in government, never changed; others, such as views of the nation's overall direction, rallied after Sept. 11 but are now back near their previous levels. Other changes, such as greater trust in government, were contextual in nature, and have also subsided.

Some polls ask people if they feel differently or are behaving differently as a result of the Sept. 11 attacks, a problematic approach because it requires retroactive self-assessment. It's a more meaningful measure of change to take direct samplings of opinion or behavior and compare them with comparable measures taken before Sept. 11.

**METHODOLOGY** – This ABC News.com poll was conducted by telephone July 24-28, 2002, among a random national sample of 508 adults. The results have a 4.5-point error margin. Sampling, data collection and tabulation by TNS Intersearch of Horsham, Pa.

Analysis by Gary Langer.

ABC News polls can be found at ABCNEWS.com on the Internet at:

<http://abcnews.go.com/sections/us/PollVault/PollVault.html>

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25. Thinking about spending time with your family, would you say that's essential to you, important but not essential, not very important or not at all important to you?

	Essential	Important	Not very	Not at all	No opin.
7/28/02	78	19	2	1	1
10/2/00*	60	36	2	1	1

\*Roper Starch for AARP: "To begin, I am going to read some things that may or may not be important to you personally. For each one, please tell me whether it is essential to you, important but not essential, not very important, or not at all important to you. If something doesn't apply, just let me know.... Spending time with family"

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