

# Inviting People to Church

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The most common way in which people join religious groups is because friends and relatives invite them. Two-thirds of Australian Protestant newcomers first joined their church through someone inviting them (*Enriching Church Life*, p.26, 52).

In the 2006 NCLS church attenders were asked:  
*Q. Would you be prepared to invite to a church service here any of your friends and relatives who do not currently attend a church?*

- Yes, and I have done so in the past 12 months
- Yes, but I have not done so in the past 12 months
- Don't know
- No, probably not
- No definitely not

Inviting people to church:

- 73% of church attenders were open to inviting someone
- 36% have invited someone in last 12 months. Additional
- 36% willing to invite someone but hadn't.
- 14% of church attenders probably or definitely **would not** invite someone
- 13% said they did not know if they would be prepared to invite someone
- Pentecostal groups have highest percentage of attenders inviting others (59%). Salvation Army also high (47%).
- New arrivals to church more likely than long-term attenders to invite others
- Switchers (those who have changed denominations) are particularly strong inviters (49%) as are newcomers (those new to church life or returned after a long absence), 44% of whom have invited in the last year.

**Figure 1: Attender inviting others to church**



Source: 2006 NCLS Attenders Survey, based on 300,388 responses in 2006 and 367,531 responses in 2001.

Reasons people don't invite others to church:

- *lack of connection with people outside church life*
- *belief that 'Those I could invite may not be interested', (selected by 20% of Protestant church attenders).*
- *belief that 'Those I could invite may not like the style of worship here' and 'Lack of confidence in talking about my faith' (both 11%).*

**Table 1: Reasons given by All Australian Attenders church attenders for not inviting others.**

<b>What most discourages you from inviting people to this congregation/parish? (Mark up to TWO)</b>	<b>All NCLS in 2006 %</b>
I do not see the need to do so	10
I don't know many people from outside church	10
My friends and contacts live too far away	10
Lack of confidence in talking about my faith	10
Fear of rejection/damaging relationships	7
They may not like the style of worship here	9
They may not be made to feel welcome here	3
They may not be interested	19
Other	6
Don't know	9

**Source: NCLS Attenders Survey I, based on 8,835 responses. Responses for 'I'm generally happy to invite' are not shown.**

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**References**

This fact sheet is based on *Occasional Paper 13: Community Connections: Faith Sharing*. For references and further information on data sources, access the presentation at [www.ncls.org.au](http://www.ncls.org.au).

See also *NCLS Research Fact Sheet 2: A Profile of People Who Share Faith*.