



## **Association of Marriage & Family Ministries**

---

### **GENERAL MARRIAGE & FAMILY STATISTICS**

1. People marrying today have a 50% chance of divorcing. Statistically, 40% of first marriages, 60% of second, and 73% of third marriages end in divorce. (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 2006)
2. The cohabitation rate has risen 1000% over 4 decades [1960-2000] (Waite & Gallagher, 2000).
3. More than one of every three children in the U.S. is born to an unmarried mother (U.S. Census Bureau, 2005).
4. Family Fragmentation [due to divorce and unwed childbearing] costs U.S. taxpayers at least \$112 billion each and every year (Scafidi, 2008).
5. There were 2.3 million marriages and 1.2 million divorces in 2005 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2006).
6. Over 90% of all Americans will marry at least once (Turvey & Olson, 2006).

### **PREMARITAL EDUCATION**

7. Premarital preparation can reduce divorce rate by 30% (Stanley, Amato, Johnson & Markman, 2006).
8. Couples who participate in a premarital program (PREPARE) significantly increased their couple satisfaction. In a recent outcome study, couples improved in 10 out of 13 relationship categories (Knutson & Olson, 2003).
9. Marriages that are preceded by living together have a 50 percent higher disruptions (divorce or separation) rates than marriages without premarital cohabitation (Larry Bumpass, National Survey of Families and Households 1988-89).
10. Children from homes where the parents are married tend to be more academically successful, more emotionally stable, and more often assume leadership roles (Waite & Gallagher, 2000; Manning & Lamb, 2003).
11. More than half of all couples cohabit before marriage. The number of cohabiting couples has increased 800% since the 1960's, when fewer than 500,000 couples were cohabiting. In 2005, according to the U.S. Bureau of the Census, 5.5 million couples were cohabiting.
12. Cohabiting before marriage is related to more frequent arguments during marriage as well as a greater perceived risk of separation and divorce when compared to couples who did not live together prior to marriage (Hill & Evans, 2006).

### **MARRIAGE ENRICHMENT**

13. After 10 years of marriage, it is predicted that only 25% of couples will still be happily married (Glenn, 1996).
14. Family instability or disruption is one of the major causes of youth suicide, now the second leading cause of death among adolescents (Nelson, Furbelow and Litman, 1988).



## **Association of Marriage & Family Ministries**

---

15. Viewing angry adults is emotionally disturbing for children and may lead to childhood and adolescent problems such as aggression and poor psychological adjustment, problems that have proven to be long lasting (Friedman & Chase-Lansdale, 2002).
16. Couples who agree on spiritual beliefs report significantly higher marital satisfaction and couple closeness than couples who are low on spiritual agreement (Larson & Olson, 2004).
17. A large body of social science research indicates that healthy, married-parent families are an optimal environment for promoting the well-being of children. Children raised by both biological parents are less likely than children raised in single- or step-parent families to be poor, to drop out of school, to have difficulty finding a job, to become teen parents or to experience emotional or behavioral problems. (National Council on Family Relations, the nation's largest organization of family therapists)
18. A large national sample (n=21,501) of married couples who completed a couple inventory (ENRICH) found the top five categories most predictive of marital happiness were: Communication, Flexibility, Couple Closeness, Personality Compatibility and Conflict Skills (Olson & Olson, 2000).

### **MARRIAGE**

19. The percentage of people over the age of 18 who are married has steadily declined. In 1970, 68% of adults were married; in 1980 66%; in 1990, 62%; and about 60% in 2000. (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 2006)

### **BENEFITS OF MARRIAGE:**

20. Married people are happier than single, widowed, or cohabiting people. About 40% of married people report being very happy with their lives, whereas only 18% of divorced people, 15% of separated people, and only 22% of widowed and 22% of cohabiting people report being very happy. (Waite & Gallagher, 2000)
21. Married people are more successful in their careers, earn more, and have more wealth than single, divorced or cohabiting individuals. (Waite & Gallagher, 2000; Antonovics & Town, 2004)
22. Two-parent households protect children from the negative effects of poverty. In the U.S., nearly 60% of the children from single-parent households live in poverty, as compared to only 11% of children from two-parent families. (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 2006)
23. Adolescents living with their biological parents are less likely to have sexual intercourse. (Pearson, Frisco, 2006; Sieving, Eisenberg, Pettingell, & Skay, 2006)
24. Married people live longer than unmarried or divorced people. Nonmarried women have 50% higher mortality rates than married women and nonmarried men have a 250% higher rate than married men. (Waite & Gallagher, 2000)
25. Married people have more sex and a better quality sexual relationship than do single, divorced or cohabiting individuals. (Waite & Gallagher, 2000)



## **Association of Marriage & Family Ministries**

---

26. Children from homes where the parents are married tend to be more academically successful, more emotionally stable, and more often assume leadership roles. (Waite & Gallagher, 2000; Manning & Lamb, 2003)
27. Adolescents living with both biological parents exhibit lower levels of problem behavior than peers from any other family type. (Carlson, 2006)
28. Males whose parents never married are significantly less likely to marry and more likely to cheat on their romantic partners. (Colman & Widon, 2004)

### **LIFE EVENTS**

29. The death of a child due to illness, accident or any other reason can have a disabling impact on a couple's marriage. Sometimes the loss may bring a couple closer to one another. However for many couples, the stress and pain of their unfathomable loss causes bitterness and anger that can cause them to grow apart. (Dougherty, Clinical Psychologist, December 2007)
30. Chronic illnesses in general and certain cancer forms in particular may influence physical intimacy and sexuality, and thereby divorce rates. (Nazareth, Lewin, and King 2001)
31. Chronic illness affects both partners in many different ways and on many different levels. It can drastically affect a couple's financial life, strain their emotional bond, and alter their intimate relationship. (Holly Bourque, January 2008)
32. During my interviews with bereaved parents, I've heard most say that the death of a child changes everything. So of course it's no surprise that many report changes in their sexual relationship after their child dies. These changes might be brief or might last for months, even years. (Paul C. Rosenblatt Ph.D., "Help Your Marriage Survive the Death of a Child," 2000)
33. Ill health in general is perceived by both the male and female partner as lowering the quality of the marriage, irrespective of whether he or she is affected. (Booth and Johnson 1994)

### **DIVORCE**

34. People marrying today have a 50% chance of divorcing. Statistically, 40% of first marriages, 60% of second, and 73% of third marriages end in divorce. (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 2006)
35. 60% of the divorces in the United States involved children (Dacey, Travers, Fiore, 2009).
36. There is growing concern that the effects of divorce may not be a temporary as we'd like to believe. In their follow-up of children of divorce, Wallerstein, Lewis, and Blakeslee (2000) stated that, as adults, these children are telling us "loud and clear" that the post-divorce years really count.
37. Divorce tends to occur most in families with a newborn, second most in families with an adolescent present. Estimates suggest that divorce affects as much as one-third to one-half of the adolescent population (Dacey, Travers, Fiore, 2009).
38. A father's absence does increase the likelihood of earlier sexual behavior and pregnancy among adolescent girls. Further, the earlier in the daughter's life that her father left, the higher the rate of early sexual behavior and teen pregnancy (Ellis et al, 2003).



## **Association of Marriage & Family Ministries**

---

39. During the early-childhood years, children demonstrate intense separation anxiety and fear of abandonment by both parents, which leads to the tendency to blame themselves for the divorce (Hetherington & Staley-Hagan, 1995; Lamb et al, 1999).
40. Most divorces involve children, and more than 1 million children are affected by divorce each year (U.S. Census Bureau, 2006).
41. Single parent families rose to an all-time high in 2005 to 37% of families (U.S. Census Bureau, 2006).
42. Over 78% of children in the U.S. living with a single parent live with a single mother (American Community Survey, 2005).
43. Two-parent households protect children from the negative effects of poverty. In the U.S., nearly 60% of the children from single-parent households live in poverty, as compared to only 11% of children from two-parent families (U.S. Census Bureau, 2006).
44. The poverty rate for a child in a single parent home is six times above that of a married, two-parent home. Typically, the household income of a divorced family falls 37%. Recent surveys have found that children from broken homes, when they become teenagers, have two to three times more behavioral and psychological problems than do children from intact homes (Zill and Schoenborn, 1988).
45. The percentage of two-parent families varies by ethnic/cultural group: 87% of Asian children live in two-parent homes; 76% of Caucasians; 70% of Hispanics; and 42% of African American. (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 2006)
46. Women are more likely than men to file for divorce. (Popenoe & Whitehead, 2005)

### **DEATH OF SPOUSE**

47. 32% of women aged 55 and older are widows; 9% of men aged 55 and older are widower (2000 U.S. Census)
48. Nearly 700,000 women lose their husbands each year and will be widows for an average of 14 years (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1999).
49. There were 800,000 new widows/widowers in the U.S. in 2002 (National Mental Health Association).
50. In 1999, there were over four times as many widows, 8.4 million, as widowers, 1.9 million (AARP).
51. The U.S. Census states that on the average, widowers will remarry within 3 years of the death of their wives, and widows remarry within 5 years. Experts state that it is important though, to marry for love ... not because you are lonely.
52. Whether you're 28 or 82, or married for 5 years or 50, the death of a spouse is a traumatic event. "The reality is you're never ready to say goodbye to someone," says Jack LoCicero, Ph.D., a certified grief counselor and president of the Illinois-based Association for Death Education and Counseling. (Revolution Health Group, February 2007)



## Association of Marriage & Family Ministries

---

53. There's ample evidence that widows/widowers exhibit what actuaries call "excess mortality." Death rates are highest within six months after bereavement and continue high for about three years. Bereavement produces higher mortality among widowers than widows, and among younger ages than older (although the age differences aren't always significant). Socioeconomic status doesn't seem to matter. (Adams, May 2007)

### RE-PREMARITAL EDUCATION

54. Divorce rate for remarried couples is 65% - 70% (Dr. Mathis Hetherington, 2004).
55. About 75% of those who divorce will eventually remarry (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 2006).
56. 30% of all children in the U.S. will spend at least some time in a stepfamily (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 2006).
57. Couples who cohabit before remarriage report lower levels of happiness in their marriage than remarried couples who did not cohabit (Xu, Hudspeth & Bartkowsk, 2006).
58. Good remarriages did not seem to help children overcome the trauma of divorce (Dr. Judith Wallerstein, *The Unexpected Legacy of Divorce, A 25 Year Landmark Study*, 2000).
59. Most men and women who divorce will remarry, but second marriages fail at a higher rate than do first marriages. Analysis of the attitudes of over 2,000 adults revealed that "over time, remarried persons are more likely to experience a decline in marital quality than are people in first marriages." Alan Booth, "Starting Over: Why Remarriages Are More Unstable," *Journal of Family Issues* 13 [1992]: 179-194
60. Despite the popular belief that parental remarriage increases a child's ability to tackle academic challenges, Jeynes (1999) found that those from reconstituted families often scored lower academically than their peers from single-parent divorced families.

### RE-MARRIAGE EVENT

61. Research suggests that re-marital couples are significantly less likely to receive premarital counseling than first marriage couples (Scott Stanley).
62. Fewer American couples who marry today see the need for religion's approval. The rate of civil marriage is on the rise coast to coast, a USA TODAY analysis of marriage license statistics suggests. ("Civil marriage on rise across USA," Cathy Lynn Grossman and In-Sung Yoo, USA TODAY, October 7, 2003).