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MARRIAGE & RELIGION RESEARCH INSTITUTE

Illustrating the way God made man

Intact Marriage and Education*

"You shall therefore lay up these words of mine in your heart and in your soul, and you shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. You shall teach them to your children, talking of them when you are sitting in your house, and when you are walking by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise." Deuteronomy 11:18-19

Social science research demonstrates the many educational benefits that children receive when they are raised in married families:

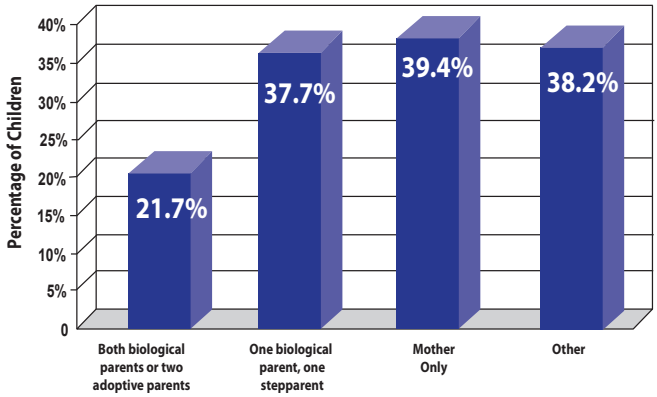
- Always-married families have a higher income on average than other family structures.
- Children born to married mothers are less likely than those born to single or cohabiting mothers to behave disruptively (i.e., disobey a teacher, be aggressive with other children) when they're in first grade.
- Children and adolescents in intact married families are more likely to care about doing well in school, to do schoolwork without being forced, and to complete their homework.
- Adolescents in single-parent families, married stepfamilies, or cohabiting stepfamilies are more likely than adolescents in always-married families to have ever been suspended or expelled from school, to have participated in delinquent activities, and to have problems getting along with teachers, doing homework, and paying attention in school.

Given the educational benefits children receive from marriage, what can you do not only to strengthen your own marriage, but to get this information out to local citizens?

The chart shows that children from intact families are less likely than children from other family structures to have behavioral issues in school. Children raised in intact homes do better – academically and personally – because they have two parents to guide, aid, and encourage them.

Percentage of Children Whose Parent was Contacted by School About Child's Problems: US Children Aged 6-17 by Family Structure

Source: National Survey of Children's Health (NSCH), 2003



For links to the research behind these statements, please visit www.marri.us/churchbulletins

*It bears emphasizing that these patterns hold for the groups involved, not for all the individuals who make up each group. There is naturally a wide variation among individuals.

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THE SOCIAL SCIENCES
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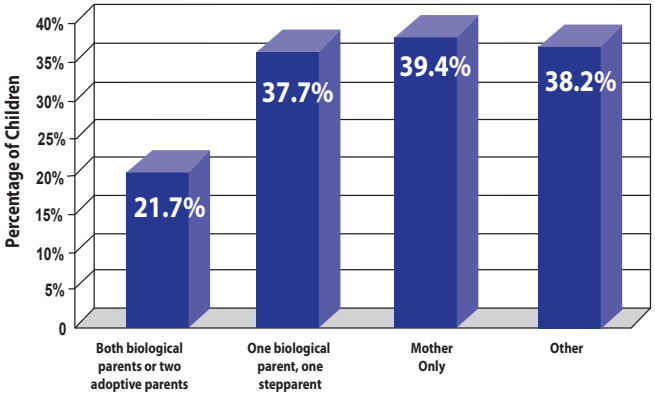

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