

Dear Friends,

This week we highlight research on the effects of parental absence on children's smoking and alcohol habits, on the link between childhood family stability and future relationship stability, and on the effects of attitudes toward marriage and of the cultural signaling effects of skin tone on sexual activity.

## NEW RESEARCH HIGHLIGHTS



### **Parental Absence Linked to Children's Smoking and Alcohol Consumption**

Those who experience parental absence in childhood smoke and consume alcohol at greater rates than those raised by both parents, [according](#) to a British study conducted at the University College London.



### **Family Stability During Childhood Affects Adult Relationship Stability**

Adolescents who experience nurturing family environments build emotion regulation strategies that strengthen relationships with spouses later in life, [reports](#) researchers at Harvard Medical School and Bryn Mawr College.



### **Attitudes Toward Marriage, Sexual Activity, and Skin Tone**

Adolescents who have positive attitudes toward marriage and negative attitudes toward cohabitation engage in much less risky sexual activity in young adulthood. This trend is more pronounced among lighter-skin individuals compared to darker skin individuals, perhaps because darker skin individuals, especially women, perceive marriage as an unattainable good, [according to](#) researchers at the University of Missouri and the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

## MARRIPEDIA ENTRIES RELATED TO THESE FINDINGS

- 1) [“Effects of Divorce on Children's Behavior”](#)
- 2) [“Effects of Marriage on Couple's Relationships”](#)
- 3) [“Effects of Divorce on Children's Sexual Activity”](#)

With an eye to the future of the family in America,

Pat Fagan

Director of the MARRI Project