

Dear Friends,

Traditionally, a young adult graduated from school, found a job, got married, and then had children—in that order. Childbearing within an intact marriage bestows significant advantages for families and communities, conferring great strength to society. Today, however, more than half of *first births* occur outside of marriage, conferring instead significant weaknesses.

FEATURED ON MARRIPEDIA

Effects of Out-of-Wedlock Birth on Children

In 2013, around 41 percent of all U.S. births—roughly 1.6 million births—were to unmarried parents. From the very beginning, children born outside of marriage have life stacked against them. While many single mothers work wonders and raise their children well despite the obstacles they encounter, for many others the challenge is too great and their children suffer the consequences. [Continue reading this entry on Marrisonia...](#)

RESEARCH HIGHLIGHTS



Teen Pregnancy Trends

Despite a sizeable drop in teen pregnancies over the last decade, the rate of these pregnancies remains alarmingly high. A new [CDC report](#) discusses a number of preventative measures to decrease teen pregnancies, but ignores the most important: marriage and abstinence until marriage. As [this Marrisonia entry](#) shows, encouraging intact marriages is key to preventing unwed pregnancies among adolescents.



Childbearing and Divorce

Each additional child conceived within a first marriage reduces the probability of divorce, whereas each additional child conceived prior to first marriage increases the likelihood of divorce, [according](#) to Hector Bellido of the University of Zaragoza, Spain.



The Economic Implications of Our Fertility Crisis

Insufficient rebound in birth and fertility rates after the 2007 recession have posed significant economic challenges to businesses and government programs, according to Janet Adamy's [an alysis](#) on the *Wall Street Journal*. Check out [this Marrisonia entry](#) to learn how religious practice is powerfully linked to adequate fertility rates.

Sincerely,

Pat Fagan, Ph.D.

Director of the Marriage and Religion Research Institute (MARRI)