

Dear Friends,

Families and church communities, rather than remote government agencies, provide powerful remedies to societal problems. However, many Americans fail to recognize this and to utilize the benefits of marriage and religion. This week we highlight new studies on the effects of welfare on marriage, on the influence of mothers' marital decisions on those of her children, and on the role that Americans believe religious institutions have in solving social problems.

NEW RESEARCH HIGHLIGHTS



Marriage Penalties

Marriage penalties inherent in current federal social welfare programs that somewhat deter lower-and middle-income couples with children from marrying are [reported](#) by W. Bradford Wilcox and Angela Rachidi of the American Enterprise Institute and Joseph Price of Brigham Young University. With the increase in the scope of these programs and the number of families affected, this influence, though seemingly mild for the programs reported, is not for the good.



Influence of a Mother's Marriage on Her Children

A mother's marital decisions—including her age at marriage or her decision to divorce—have a significant influence on her children's approach to romantic relationships, [reports](#) Rachel Arocho and Claire Kamp Dush of Ohio State University.



Americans Fail to Recognize Saving Power of Religion

Though still a majority, a declining number of Americans believe that religious institutions help solve important social problems, according to this recent report from [Pew Research Center](#).

MARRIPEDIA ENTRIES RELATED TO THESE FINDINGS

- 1) [“Effects of Welfare on Families”](#)
- 2) [“ Effects of Divorce on Children's Future Relationships”](#)
- 3) [“Effects of Religious Practice on Society”](#)

With an eye to the future of America,

Pat Fagan

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