

# I Choose to Stand with Children Talking Points

“Stand with Children” is a positive educational project to support the common good and raise awareness about:

1. **The common interest of every child** without exception in having a married mother and father.
2. **The family as the foundation of social justice** – “original cell of social life” – the first school of love, peace, and justice.

Children cannot voice or advocate their common interest. They depend on adults to advocate for them.

## Main Points

- Having a mother and a father is common to every human person.
- It is natural for a person to desire a married mother and a father. Although many are deprived of one or both parents through death, divorce, abandonment, mental illness or abusive betrayal, the loss is a privation grieved by the person who naturally desires a mother and a father.
- Mothers and fathers are good. They are good for the development of the human person and provide anchors for the nuclear and extended family.
- The reason for the public interest in marriage is in providing the foundation of the family with a mother and a father for children.
- Promoting marriage for those who engage in reproductive acts (the only acts that produce new life) is a matter of social justice for children.
- Depriving a child of a mother or father intentionally, unless done for the protection of the child, is a denial of justice.

## Supporting Points

More and more children are deprived of a married mother and father.

- 40% of children are born outside of marriage.
- 34% of children live apart from their biological fathers.
- 28% of children live with a single parent.

There is a growing marriage gap between the poor and middle class as well as between high school **dropouts** and college-educated:

- 60% cohabitation rate for high school dropouts (37% for college grads)
- 44% mothers without husbands for high school dropouts (12% for college grads)
- High correlation between marriage breakdown and poverty, delinquency, school dropout rates, and teen pregnancy.

The public understands the seriousness of the situation:<sup>1</sup>

- 71% “say the growth of unwed mothers is a ‘big problem.’”
- 69% “say that a child needs a mother and a father to grow up happily.”

Children who live absent their biological fathers are, on average, at least two to three times more likely to be poor, to use drugs, to experience educational, health, emotional and behavioral problems, to be victims of child abuse, and to engage in criminal behavior than their peers who live with their married, biological (or adoptive) parents. (*National Fatherhood Initiative, 2008*)

## The Choice

The common interest in a married mother and father for every child without exception.

OR

The private interest of a small group of adults to redefine and restructure marriage and the family.

“... children are powerless to preserve or defend their stake in their parents’ marriage”

- David Popenoe, Rutgers University



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<sup>1</sup> Public opinion survey -- “As Marriage and Parenthood Drift Apart, Public is Concerned about Social Impact,” Pew Research Center, July 1, 2007 (survey conducted between 2/16 and 3/14/2007)