Quick Facts about the Breakdown of Marriage and Family

Do we need an institution that unites kids with their moms and dads? Yes or no?

- Since 1980, the marriage rate is down about 45%.
- 41% of children are born to unmarried mothers (73% for African Americans)\(^1\)
- 71% of poor families are not married\(^2\)
- Marriage decreases the probability a child will live in poverty by 82%\(^3\)
- Fatherless or single parent homes produce children who are
  - 2 times more likely to be arrested for juvenile crime\(^4\)
  - 2 times more likely to be treated for emotional and behavioral problems\(^5\)
  - 2 times more likely to be suspended or expelled from school\(^6\)
  - 33% more likely to drop out of school\(^7\)
  - 3 times more likely to end up in jail by age 30\(^8\)

- **Compared to a married mother and father,** children living with an unmarried mother and biological father are 4 times more likely to be sexually, physically or emotionally abused, and 3 times more likely to be physically, emotionally, or educationally neglected

- **Compared to a married mother and father,** children living with an unmarried mother and a boyfriend are 11 times more likely to be

**The effects of marriage breakdown on children continue into adulthood.**

- Compared to intact families, children raised by single parents are
  - 50% more likely to suffer poverty as adults\(^10\)
- Compared to intact families, girls raised by single parents are
  - 2 times more likely to have a child outside of marriage\(^11\)

**Attitudes about marriage call for need to promote the reality of marriage**

- High school seniors: 56%—OK to be unmarried and have children\(^12\)
- 18- to 39-year-olds: 30%—“Marriage is very important if a couple has children together”\(^13\)
- 18- to 29-year-olds: 44%—Marriage is obsolete\(^14\)

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3. Ibid.
11. Ibid.

www.takebackmarriage.org