

# 21 Reasons WHY MARRIAGE MATTERS

Twenty-One Conclusions from the Social Sciences

## **The Twenty-One Conclusions: A Snapshot**

### **FAMILY**

1. Marriage increases the likelihood that fathers have good relationships with their children
2. Cohabitation is not the functional equivalent of marriage
3. Growing up outside an intact marriage increases the likelihood that children themselves divorce or become unwed parents
4. Marriage is a virtually universal human institution.

### **ECONOMICS**

5. Divorce and unmarried childbearing increase poverty for both children and mothers
6. Married couples seem to build more wealth on average than singles or cohabiting couples
7. Married men earn more money than do single men with similar education and job histories
8. Parental divorce (or failure to marry) appears to increase children's risk of school failure
9. Parental divorce reduces the likelihood that children will graduate from college and achieve high-status jobs

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## **PHYSICAL HEALTH AND LONGEVITY**

10. Children who live with their own two married parents enjoy better physical health, on average, than do children in other family forms
11. Parental marriage is associated with a sharply lower risk of infant mortality
12. Marriage is associated with reduced rates of alcohol and substance abuse for both adults and teens
13. Married people, especially married men, have longer life expectancies than do otherwise similar singles
14. Marriage is associated with better health and lower rates of injury, illness, and disability for both men and women

## **MENTAL HEALTH AND EMOTIONAL WELL-BEING**

15. Children whose parents divorce have higher rates of psychological distress and mental illness
16. Divorce appears significantly to increase the risk of suicide
17. Married mothers have lower rates of depression than do single or cohabiting mothers

## **CRIME AND DOMESTIC VIOLENCE**

18. Boys raised in single-parent families are more likely to engage in delinquent and criminal behaviour
19. Marriage appear to reduce the risk that adults will be either perpetrators or victims of crime
20. Married women appear to have a lower risk of experiencing domestic violence than do cohabiting or dating women
21. A child who is not living with his or her own two married parents is at greater risk of child abuse