

Utah Marriage Commission

Quick Facts:

- Divorce & unmarried childbearing costs Utah taxpayers at least \$276 million a year in public services
- Marriage is associated with reduced rates of alcohol and substance abuse for both adults and teens
- Children whose parents divorce have higher rates of psychological distress and mental illness
- Marriage increases the likelihood that parents have good relationships with their children
- A child who is not living with his or her own two married parents is at greater risk of child abuse

Sources:
Benjamin Scafidi, Principal Investigator, *The Taxpayer Costs of Divorce & Unwed Childbearing*, 2008, pg 38

W. Bradford Wilcox, et al., *Why Marriage Matters*, Third Edition, 2011

The Utah Marriage Commission is an advisory board of 17 appointed members. Our mission is to provide educational services to help individuals and couples form and sustain healthy relationships and enduring marriages.

The Marriage Commission is Not about:

- Defining Marriage
- Coercing anyone to marry or remain in unhealthy relationships
- Withdrawing supports from single parents or diminishing the important work of single parents
- Stigmatizing those who choose divorce
- Limiting access to divorce

SOME OF OUR SERVICES

- Consulting with Department of Human Services programs for integration of relationship skills education
- Partnering with agencies to provide relationship skills education in local Utah communities
- Maintaining a website (StrongerMarriage.org) to provide research-based information and online educational resources statewide
- Promoting the *Adult Roles & Financial Literacy* high school course
- Distributing the *Utah Marriage Handbook*
- Providing curriculum training to family life educators

RESULTS (Sept 15-Oct 31, 2014)

- Contracts for services and evaluation with USU Washington County Extension, Utah Valley University, and Weber State University became effective September 15, 2014.
- 101 educators were trained and certified to teach research-based curriculum.
- Partnerships were formed in Utah and Weber Counties with Head Start, Domestic Violence Shelters, Public Schools, Habitat For Humanity, etc.
- Two new marriage & relationship education programs were developed locally in Utah and Weber counties to serve high-risk/low-income couples and individuals. Classes were taught at partner facilities. In addition, Washington County Extension continued an ongoing weekly education program.
- StrongerMarriage.org received 71,337 visits (average 35,669 visits/month).

IF YOU WANT MORE INFORMATION

Utah Marriage Commission • 801-538-3909

