

Marriage Increases Wealth

Issue: Intact marriages between biological mothers and fathers¹ are closely tied with economic well-being and a strong marketplace. Specifically, marriage is associated with increased employment, savings/ net worth, and income.

Employment

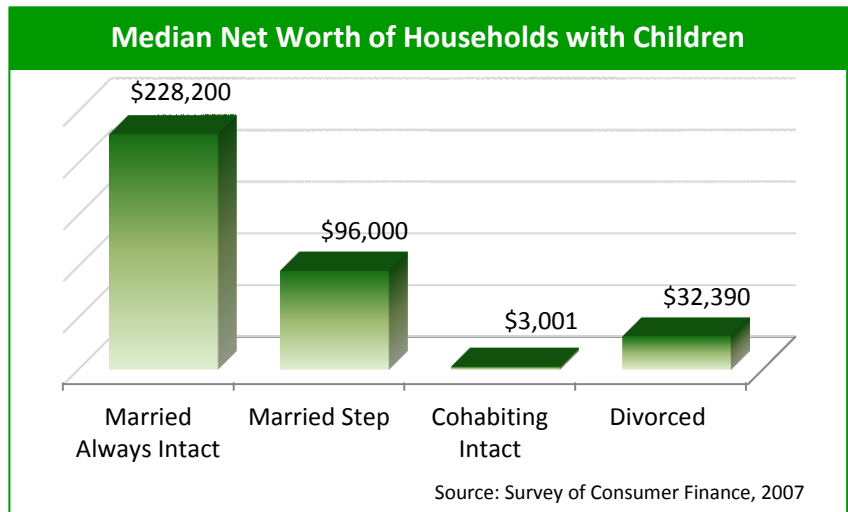
- People who are not married and have less education work the fewest hours per year.²
- The income of married adults exceeds the income of unmarried adults at every education level.³
- Married males earn 44 percent more than their unmarried counterparts. This exceeds the male college premium (34 percent).⁴

Savings and Net Worth

- Married couples save more than unmarried couples.⁵
- Married households have larger median net worths than other family structures.⁶

Income

- Intact married families have the largest annual income of all family structures with children under 18,⁷ even when accounting for family size.⁸
- The marriage premium produces an annual income increase of approximately .9 percent for men.⁹
- Median weekly earnings for married women and men are higher than the earnings of the divorced, never married, separated, and widowed.¹⁰
- Married couples file less than half of all income-tax returns, but pay nearly three-quarters of all income taxes.¹¹



Conclusion: The intact, married family naturally increases wealth and decreases poverty. MARRI research available online¹² shows that marriage is a key component to improving the marketplace.

¹ "Married two-parent families," "married-couple families," and similar terms within this document all refer to families in which there is a married mother and father present. Note, according to the US Census Bureau, "Family households and married-couple families do not include same-sex married couples even if the marriage was performed in a state issuing marriage certificates for same-sex couples."

² Susan J. Popkin, "Welfare: Views from the Bottom," *Social Problems*, Vol. 37, No. 1 (February 1990), pp. 64

Fry, Richard Allen, and D'Vera Cohn. *Women, men and the new economics of marriage*. Pew Research Center, 2010.

³ Fry, Richard Allen, and D'Vera Cohn. *Women, men and the new economics of marriage*. Pew Research Center, 2010.

⁴ Caplan, Bryan. "The College Premium vs. the Marriage Premium: A Case of Double Standards." Library of Economics and Liberty. January 23, 2012. Accessed July 29, 2014.

http://econlog.econlib.org/archives/2012/01/the_college_pre.html

⁵ Joseph Lupton and James P. Smith, "Marriage, Assets, and Savings," in *Marriage and the Economy: Theory and Evidence From Advanced Industrial Societies*, ed. Shoshana A. Grossbard-Schechtman (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 129-152. As cited by The Heritage Foundation: Family Facts. Available at

<http://www.familyfacts.org/briefs/31/family-structure-and-economic-well-being>. Accessed 20 July 2011.

Joseph Lupton and James P. Smith, "Marriage, Assets, and Savings," *Labor and Population Program*, Working Paper Series 99-12 (November 1999): 20. As cited in Patrick F. Fagan, Andrew J. Kidd, and Henry Potrykus, "Marriage and Economic Well-Being: The Economy of the Family Rises or Falls with Marriage," (May 2011). Available at

<http://marri.frc.org/get.cfm?i=RS11E03>. Accessed July 2011.

⁶ Charles, Pajarita, Michael Grinstein-Weiss, Yeong Hun Yeo, and Min Zhan. "Asset holding and net worth among households with children: Differences by household type." *Children and Youth Services Review* 30: 62-78.

⁷ Survey of Consumer Finance, 2007. As cited in Patrick F. Fagan, Andrew J. Kidd, and Henry Potrykus, "Marriage and Economic Well-Being: The Economy of the Family Rises or Falls with Marriage," (May 2011). Available at

<http://marri.frc.org/get.cfm?i=RS11E03>. Accessed 20 July 2011.

⁸ Richard W. Johnson and Melissa M. Favreault, "Economic Status in Later Life among Women Who Raised Children Outside of Marriage," *Journal of Gerontology* 59B, no. 6 (2004): S319. As cited in Patrick F. Fagan, Andrew J. Kidd, and Henry Potrykus, "Marriage and Economic Well-Being: The Economy of the Family Rises or Falls with Marriage," (May 2011). Available at <http://marri.frc.org/get.cfm?i=RS11E03>. Accessed 20 July 2011.

Sarah Avellar and Pamela J. Smock, "The Economic Consequences of the Dissolution of Cohabiting Unions," *Journal of Marriage and Family* 67, no. 2 (May 2005): 315-327. As cited by The Heritage Foundation: Family Facts. Available at <http://www.familyfacts.org/briefs/31/family-structure-and-economic-well-being>. Accessed 20 July 2011.

⁹ George A. Akerlof, "Men Without Children," *The Economic Journal* 108 (1998): 287-309. As cited in Pat Fagan, Henry Potrykus, and Rob Schwarzwald, "Our Fiscal Crisis: We Cannot Tax, Spend and Borrow Enough to Substitute for Marriage," (June 2011). Available at <http://microsite.frc.org/get.cfm?i=OR12A01>. Accessed 20 July 2011.

See also Kate Antonovics and Robert Town, "Are All the Good Men Married? Uncovering the Sources of the Marital Wage Premium," *American Economic Review* 94, no. 2 (2004): 317-321; Philip N. Cohen, "Cohabitation and the Declining Marriage Premium for Men," *Work and Occupations* 29, no. 3 (2002): 356; Daniela Casale, "The Male Marital Earnings Premium in the Context of Bridewealth Payments: Evidence from South Africa," *Economic Development and Cultural Change* 58, no. 2 (2010): 219; Robert F. Schoeni, "Marital Status and Earnings in Developed Countries," *Journal of Population Economics* 8, no. 4 (November 1995): 357. All as cited in Patrick F. Fagan, Andrew J. Kidd, and Henry Potrykus, "Marriage and Economic Well-Being: The Economy of the Family Rises or Falls with Marriage," (May 2011). Available at <http://marri.frc.org/get.cfm?i=RS11E03>. Accessed 20 July 2011.

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Leslie S. Stratton, "Examining the Wage Differential for Married and Cohabiting Men," *Economic Inquiry* 40 (2002): 199-212.

¹⁰ U.S. Department of Labor. U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. Report 1031 July 2011. *Highlight of Women's Earnings 2010*. Washington, D.C. Accessed July 29, 2014. <http://www.bls.gov/cps/cpswom2010.pdf>

¹¹ Scott A. Hodge, "Married Couples File Less Than Half of All Tax Returns, But Pay 74 percent of All Income Taxes," Tax Foundation Fiscal Fact No. 4, March 25, 2003.

¹² www.marri.us For example, "U.S. Social Policy Dependence on the Family Derived from the Index of Belonging", "Non-Marriage Reduces U.S. Labor Participation: The Abandonment of Marriage Puts America at Risk of a Depression", and "164 Reasons to Marry"