

The Effects of Divorce on Children

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Each year, over a million American children suffer the divorce of their parents. Divorce causes irreparable harm to all involved, but most especially to children.

Divorce detrimentally impacts individuals and society in numerous ways across all major institutions.

- **Family:** Divorce permanently weakens the family and the relationship between children and parents. It frequently leads to the development of destructive conflict management methods, diminished social competence, the early loss of virginity, diminished sense of masculinity or femininity, more trouble with dating, more cohabitation, greater likelihood of divorce, higher expectations of divorce later in life, and a decreased desire to have children.
- **Religious practice:** Divorce diminishes the frequency of worship of God and recourse to Him in prayer.
- **Education:** Divorce diminishes children's learning capacity and educational attainment.
- **The marketplace:** Divorce reduces household income and deeply cuts individual earning capacity.
- **Government:** Divorce significantly increases crime, abuse and neglect, drug use, and the costs of compensating government services.
- **Health and well-being:** Divorce weakens children's health and longevity. It also increases behavioral, emotional, and psychiatric risks, including even suicide.

Divorce damages society and consumes social, human, and economic capital. Though it might be shown to benefit some individuals in some individual cases, overall it causes a temporary decrease in an individual's quality of life and puts some "on a downward trajectory from which they might never fully recover."