Marriage Promotes Education

**Issue:** Family background impacts children’s educational success. Children raised in married families with a mother and father have higher achievement, attainment, and engagement in school.

**Achievement**
- High school students in intact families have grade point averages (GPAs) 11 percent higher than those from divorced families.
- Children in intact married families have the highest combined English and Math GPAs.

**Educational Attainment**
- Individuals from intact families completed, on average, more years of schooling and were more likely to graduate from high school and college than were their peers raised in non-intact families.
- Children from intact married families have the highest high school graduation rate of all family structures.
- More children from married-parent families (40 percent of sons, 44.7 percent of daughters) plan to continue their education after receiving a Bachelor’s degree than children from single parent families (30.7 percent of sons, 35.3 percent of daughters).

**Children’s Engagement**
- Children and adolescents in intact married families are more likely to care about doing well in school. They are more likely to do schoolwork without being forced, to do more than “just enough to get by,” and to do their homework.8
- Children from intact families have fewer behavioral problems in school.
- Children of intact families had the lowest expulsion rate of all family types, while children of single-parent families had the highest rate of expulsion.
- The intact biological family facilitates parental involvement in adolescent children's education.

**Conclusion:** Intact, married families efficiently lay a strong foundation for the education of the children of our nation. MARRI research available online shows why marriage is a key component to promoting education.

2. "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."


