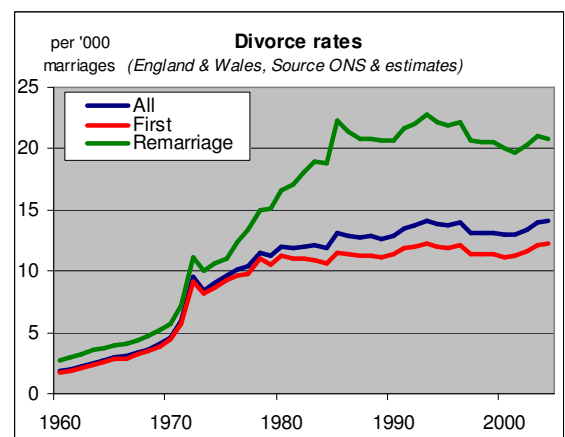
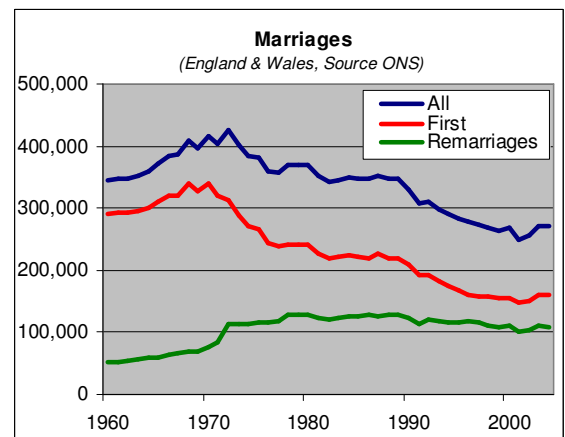


Marriage Facts

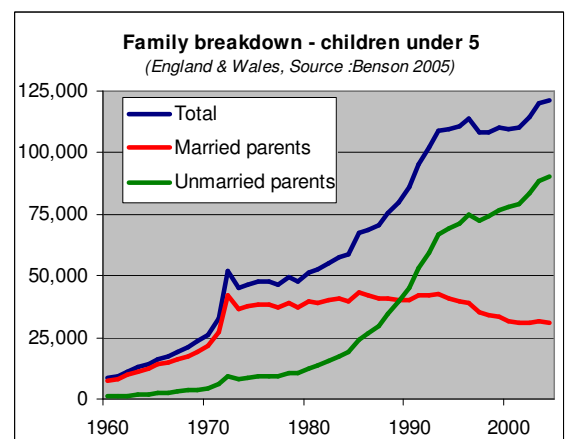
POPULARITY – Marriage remains popular and successful.

- ❑ Most young people aspire to marriage; 92% of 15 year olds want to settle down and marry one day (*Sex Under Sixteen, Family Education Trust research report 2000, and Bliss Magazine 2004*)
- ❑ The numbers of marriages are falling – there were 244,710 marriages in England & Wales in 2005 of which 146,120 were the first marriage for both partners (provisional, ONS 2006)
- ❑ People are waiting longer to marry these days. The average ages for first marriages in 2005 were 31.7 years for men and 29.5 years for women (*provisional, ONS 2006*)
- ❑ Most marriages last a lifetime - 66% of first marriages and 60% of all marriages last until one partner dies (*Social Trends 2004 ONS*)
- ❑ The median time to divorce is 11.1 years – about the same as in the 1960's (*Social Trends 2004 ONS*)
- ❑ In 2002, 54% of men and 50% of women aged 16 and over were married, and just 10% of men and 9% of women were cohabiting (*ONS General Household Survey 2002*)
- ❑ Divorce rates have remained constant at about 12.7 per thousand marriages/year since the 1980's



FAMILY STABILITY – Married people are far more likely to stay together than unmarried people

- ❑ Unmarried parents are 4-5 times more likely to break up (*Boheim & Ermisch, 1999; Lindgren, 1997*)
- ❑ By a child's 5th birthday, 8% of UK married parents have split up, compared to 52% of cohabiters, and 25% of those who marry after the birth (*Kiernan, 1999*)
- ❑ 70% of UK children born to married parents in 1997 can expect to spend their entire childhood with both natural parents, compared to only 36% of children born to unmarried parents (*Ermisch & Francesconi, 2000*)
- ❑ 150,000 children under 5 experience the separation of their parents each year. For 80% their parents are unmarried (*Benson, February 2005*)



GENERATIONAL EFFECTS – Children from broken homes face greater risks in all major areas of life

- ❑ They are more likely to experience hardships – whether low income, unemployment, poverty, or homelessness.
- ❑ They are more likely to experience problems – whether to well-being, health or crime.
- ❑ They are more likely to be unsuccessful – whether at school, at work or in relationships.
- ❑ They are more likely to avoid marriage and more likely to divorce if they do marry (*O'Neill, 2002*)
- ❑ 60,000 children are in care, 98% of admissions are due to family breakdown (*Department of Health, 2002, ref 2002/0193*)

WELL-BEING – Married people and their children are happier and have better mental health

- ❑ Married people are twice as likely to be “happy” with life and less than half as likely to be “not too happy” compared to either single, cohabiting, separated, divorced or widowed people (*Waite & Gallagher, 2000*)
- ❑ Mental health improves consistently and substantially after marriage and deteriorates substantially after divorce or separation. These are effects of marriage and divorce and not because healthy people marry and unhealthy people divorce (*Marks & Lambert, 1998, Horwitz et al, 1996*)
- ❑ Children in single parent households are twice as likely to be unhappy, have low self-esteem, or have mental health problems, even after taking demographic factors into account (*Cockett & Tripp, 1994; Melzer & al, 2000*)

HEALTH – Married people and their children have lower mortality rates and better physical health

- ❑ In the UK, divorced men aged 20-60 have 70%-100% higher mortality rates. Divorced women over the age of 25 have 35%-58% higher mortality rates (*ONS, 2001 -Mortality*). Mortality rates amongst cohabiters is no different than that of singles (*Lillard & Waite, 1995*)
- ❑ Unmarried men & women occupy an astonishing 90% of all beds in hospital & care homes – up from an average of 70% during 1921-1971. That's 7 & 16 times respectively more than married men & women (*Prior & Hayes, 2003*).
- ❑ Divorced fathers are far more likely to engage in risky behaviour, including drugs, alcohol and unsafe sex (Umberson, 1987; Wellings & al, 1994) Divorce makes young men & women twice as likely to increase their drinking (*Power & al, 1999*)
- ❑ Children in single parent households are twice as likely to complain of aches, pains and sickness, even after taking demographic factors into account (*Cockett & Tripp, 1994*)
- ❑ “Sudden Infant Death Syndrome” is 3 times more common amongst unmarried mothers and 7 times more common amongst single mothers, compared to married mothers (*ONS, 2002 - Mortality*)

WEALTH – Married people are more productive, earn more and save more

- ❑ Married men earn a “wage premium” that rises from 10% to 40% over time in almost all developed countries. This gain equates to a university degree (*Schoeni, 1995*)
- ❑ Cohabiting couples achieve only half this wage premium and it does not rise over time. (*Daniel, 1995; Hao, 1996*).
- ❑ A US study found that married people in their 50s and 60s had roughly twice the financial assets of divorcees, widows or other unmarried people. This was due more to higher savings rates than higher earnings (*Smith, 1995*).

POVERTY – Married people and their children are far less likely to experience poverty

- ❑ 69% of UK single mothers live in the bottom 40% of household income, compared to 34% of couples with children (*DWP, 2002*)
- ❑ Single mothers, whether well-educated or not, are 3-4 times more likely to live in poverty than married mothers (*McLanahan & Sandefur, 1994*).
- ❑ UK single parents are 8 times as likely to be out of work and 12 times as likely to receive income support (*ONS, 2001 - Work; ONS, 2002 - Family*)
- ❑ Family breakdown costs the nation £15 billion a year (*The Cost of Family Breakdown, FMI report 2000*)

CRIME – Married people are far safer to be around in terms of crime, domestic violence and child abuse

- ❑ A major UK study found that parental divorce before age 10 was a major predictor of later adolescent delinquency and adult criminality (*Farrington, 1990*)
- ❑ Children from broken homes are 9 times more likely to become young offenders, accounting for 70% of all young offenders (*YJB, 2002*)
- ❑ Child abuse is far more likely without both married biological parents – 6 times in stepfamilies, 33 times when the mother has a live-in boyfriend, and 20 times even when both biological parents cohabit (*Whelan, 1994*)
- ❑ A major Home Office study found that unmarried men & women – single, cohabiting, separated or divorced – were more than twice as likely to experience domestic violence compared to married people (*Mirrlees-Black, 1999*)



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www.2-in-2-1.co.uk
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Bristol Community Family Trust
Harry Benson
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