



Does Marriage Still Matter?

A Current Perspective



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Charlie and Helen Dibble





The Dibble Institute

Resources for Teaching Relationship Skills

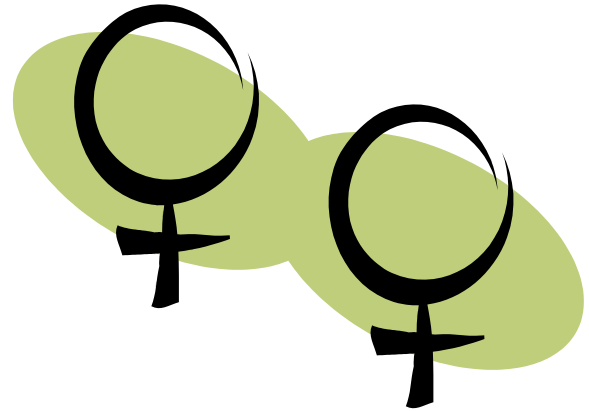
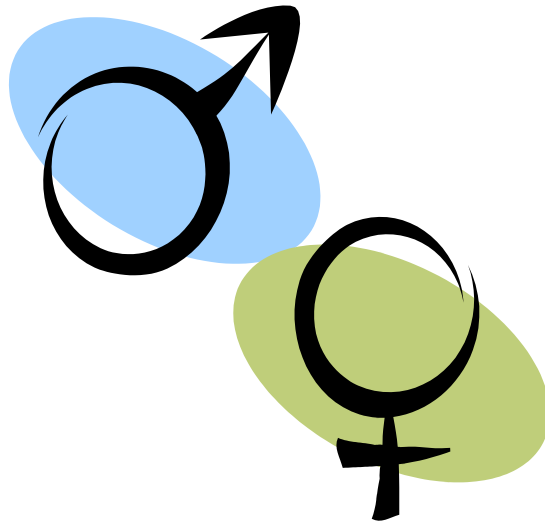
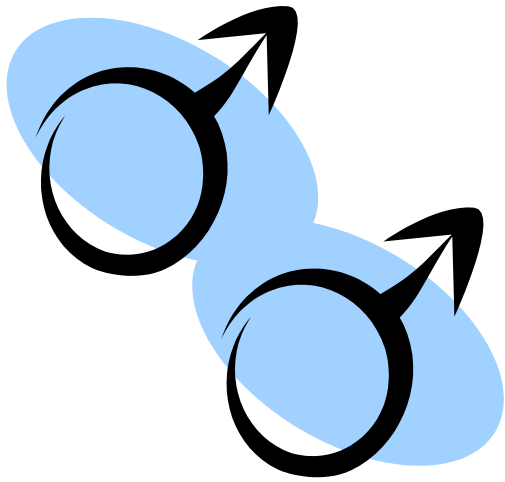
The Dibble Institute believes in research.



The Dibble Institute
believes in stable, safe, and healthy families.



The Dibble Institute believes
all people deserve respect.





You work with young people because you want to help them achieve their own goals and dreams.



Sometimes it can be challenging to address healthy, romantic relationships and questions around marriage.



We want to reach students with accurate information and helpful skills.



Let's explore the data, research, and practical messages associated with marriage and family today.





What is the current state of marriage?

What's the story behind the "marriage movement"?

What are the current research questions on marriage, especially on outcomes for youth and children?

Does marriage matter and, if so, for whom?

How can I help young people gain agency in their intimate relationships?

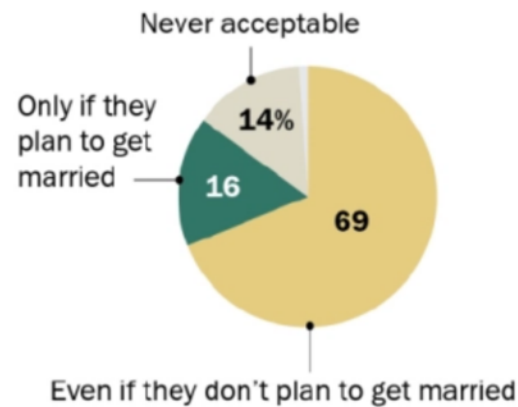


What is the current state of marriage?

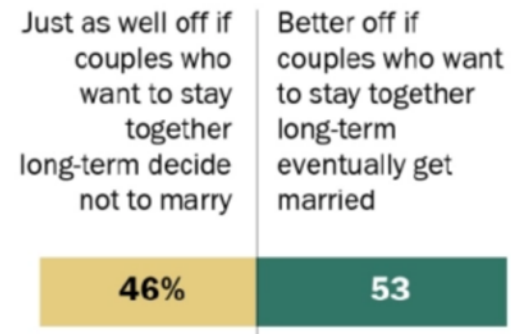
Most Americans see societal benefits of marriage.

Wide acceptance of cohabitation, even as many Americans see societal benefits in marriage

% of adults saying it is acceptable for an unmarried couple to live together ...



% of adults saying society is ...



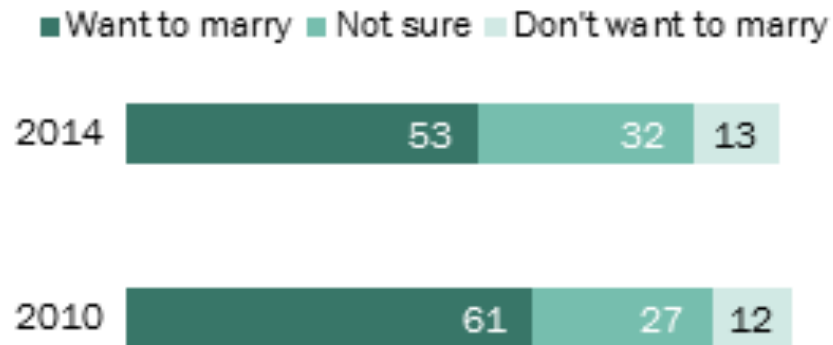
Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted June 25-July 8, 2019.
"Marriage and Cohabitation in the U.S."

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

Most never-married adults hope to wed.

Fewer Never-Married Adults Now Say They Hope to Wed

% of never-married adults who say they ...



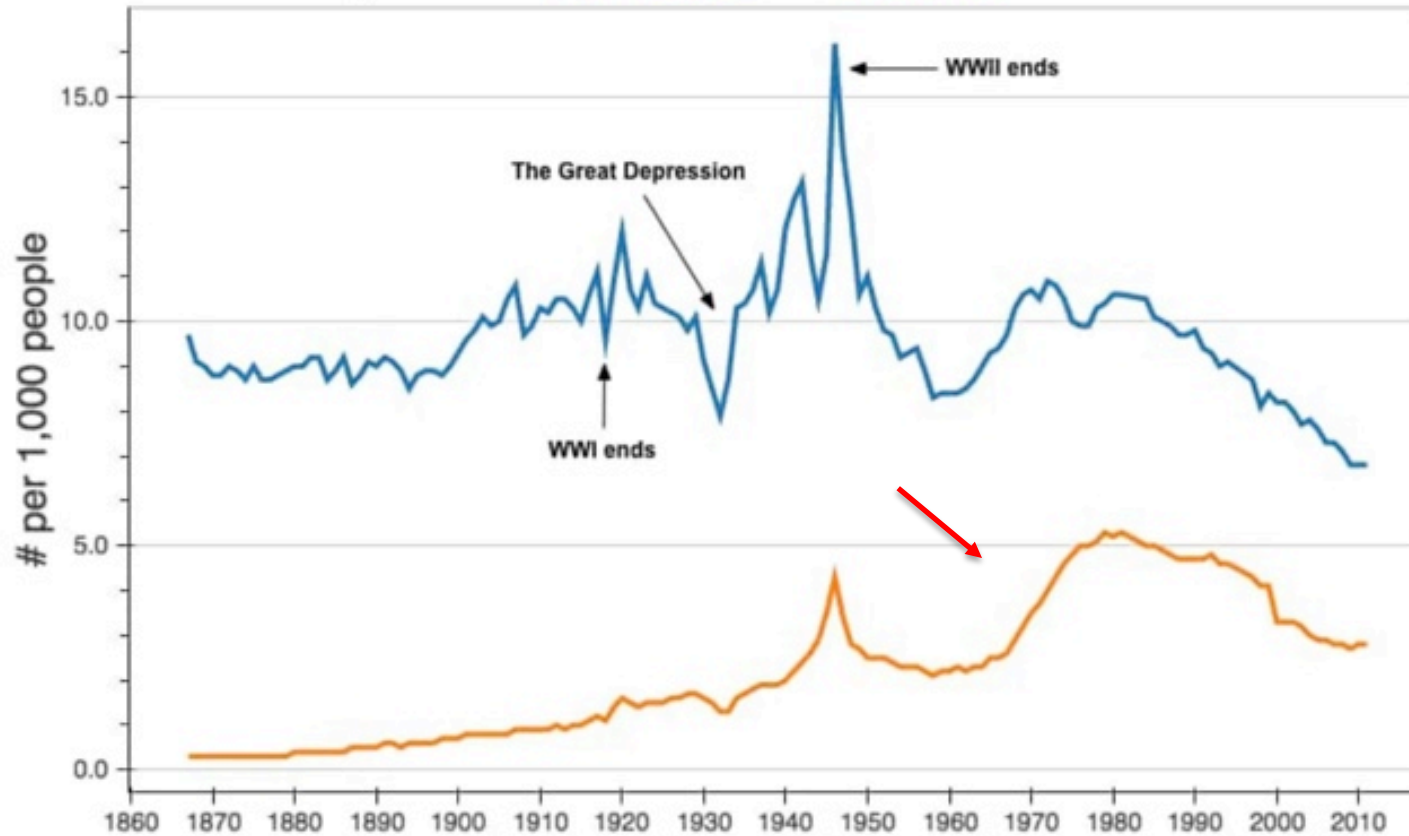
Note: "Don't Know/Refused" responses not shown.

Source: Pew Research Center surveys, May 22-25 and May 29-June 1, 2014 (N=2,003) and Oct. 1-21, 2010 (N=2,691)

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

Marriage rates have fallen since the early 90s.

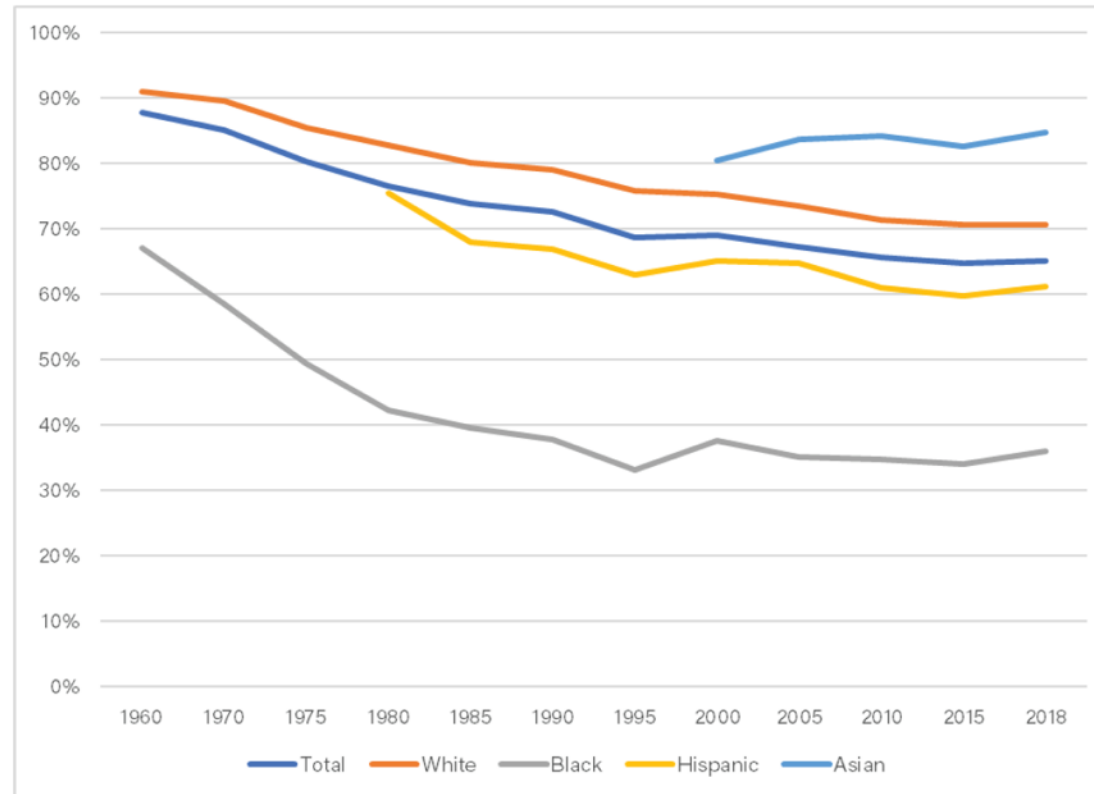
144 years of marriage and divorce in the U.S.



Data source: CDC NCHS
Author: Randy Olson (@randal_olson / randalolson.com)

Fewer children are being raised by two, married parents.

Figure 13. Percentage of Children Under Age 18 Living with Two Married Parents, by Year and Race, United States

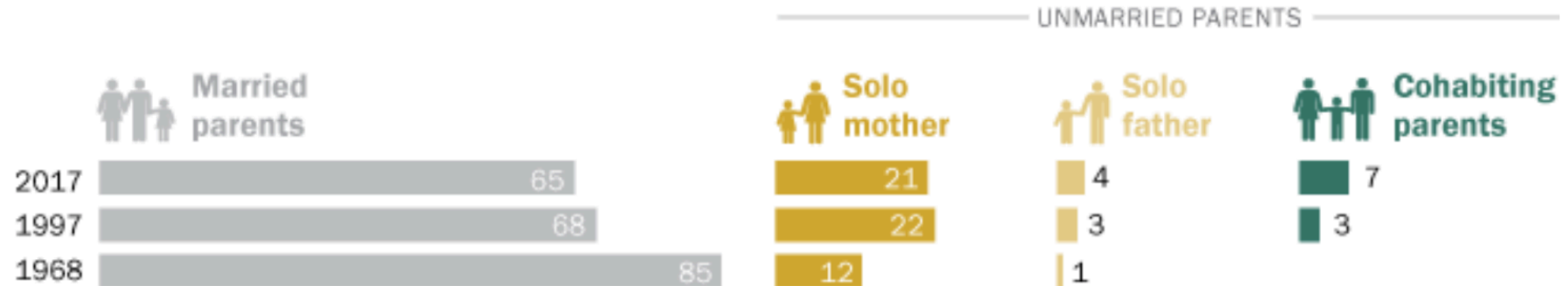


Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Reports, "America's Families and Living Arrangements." Table C3.

One in five children are living with a single mom.

About one-in-five children are living with a solo mom

% of children younger than 18 living with ...



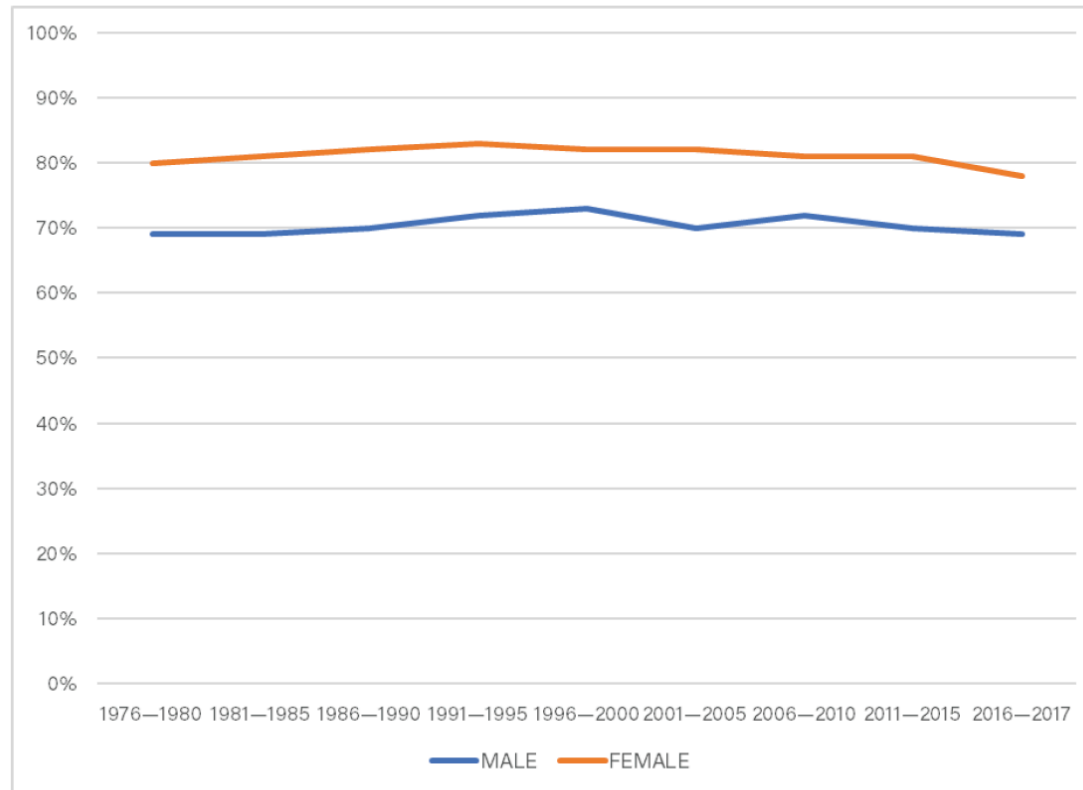
Note: Children who are not living with any parents are not shown. Data regarding cohabitation available since 1997 only.

Source: Pew Research Center analysis of Current Population Survey March Supplement (IPUMS).

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

Young people's interest in marriage remains high.

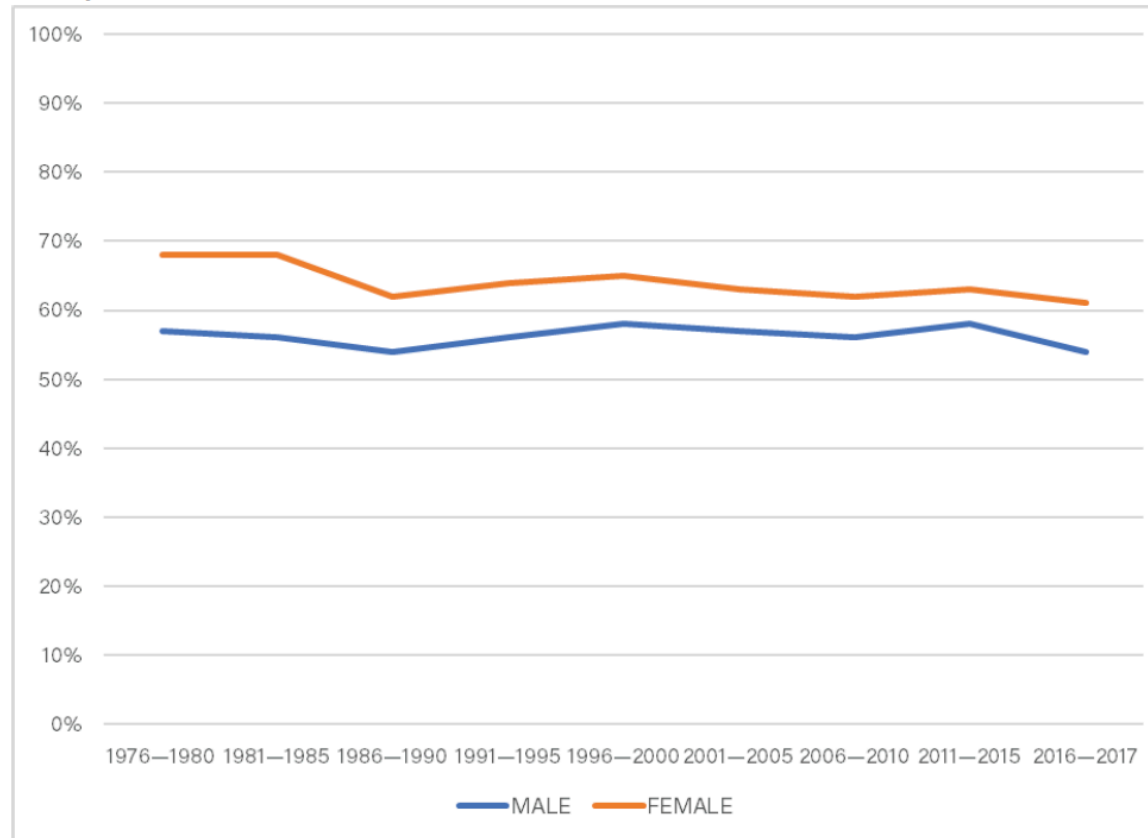
Figure 17. Percentage of High School Seniors Who Said Having a Good Marriage and Family Life Is "Extremely Important," by Period, United States



Source: "Monitoring the Future Survey," conducted by the Survey Research Center at the University of Michigan.

Yet, their confidence lags.

Figure 18. Percentage of High School Seniors Who Said It is “Very Likely” They Will Stay Married to the Same Person for Life, by Period, United States



Source: "Monitoring the Future Survey," conducted by the Survey Research Center at the University of Michigan.



What is the current state of marriage?

What's the story behind the “marriage movement”?

The Marriage Movement began in the 1990s.



In the early days,
marriage itself was the key variable.



from... Why Marriage Matters (from 1996)

MARRIAGE SUCCESS

- Better health
- Less injury
- Lower crime
- Lower domestic violence
- Lower teen pregnancy
- Higher home ownership
- Higher property values

MARRIAGE FAILURE

- Higher teen drug/alcohol rates
- More likely to repeat a grade
- More violent crime
- More teens carrying weapons
- Increase for social services
- More likely to drop out of school
- Higher suicide and depression

Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF)
added marriage and fatherhood goals in 1996.



Since 2006, OFA has administered the Healthy Marriage and Responsible Fatherhood grants

OFFICE OF FAMILY ASSISTANCE

An Office of the Administration for Children & Families



What is the current state of marriage?

What's the story behind the "marriage movement"?

What are the current research questions on marriage, especially on outcomes for youth and children?



What are the current research questions about the benefits of marriage?

- Is it due to higher income and lower expenses?
- Are two, committed spouses better able to provide consistent parenting?
- Or, is marriage the visible expression of other internal attributes?



What are the current research questions about the benefits of marriage?

- Does marriage create stability?
- Or is marriage the by-product of stability?





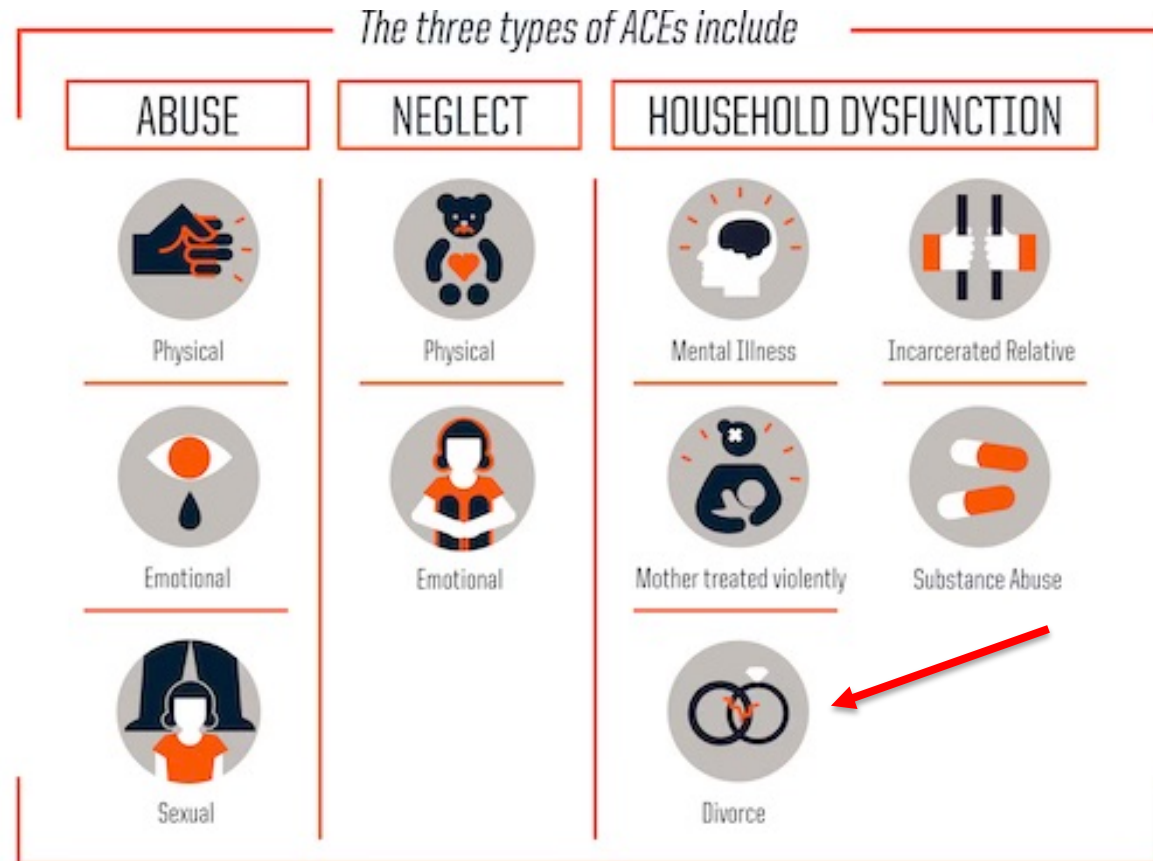
What are the current research questions about the benefits of marriage?

- Does the decline in marriage exacerbate poverty and weaken economic mobility? Or...
- Does a bad economy result in a decline in stable, married, two-parent families? Or...
- Could both be true?



What are the current research questions about the benefits of marriage?

Why is parental divorce or separation included as an Adverse Childhood Experience?





What is the current state of marriage?

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Does marriage matter and, if so, for whom?

When talking about family form,
we are talking averages, not about specific people.



Why marriage matters to adults

- It's more stable than cohabiting.

Married couples tend to

- Plan their children
- Have more education
- Earn higher incomes



Brookings Institute - Cohabiting parents differ from married ones in three big ways

Why marriage matters to adults

- Married couples are better able to weather the challenges of parenthood (*modest protection*).
- Married couples have more assets and wealth mid-life.
- Married couples report greater happiness. (*Especially when their heads are in the game.*)



State of Our Unions, Brad Wilcox

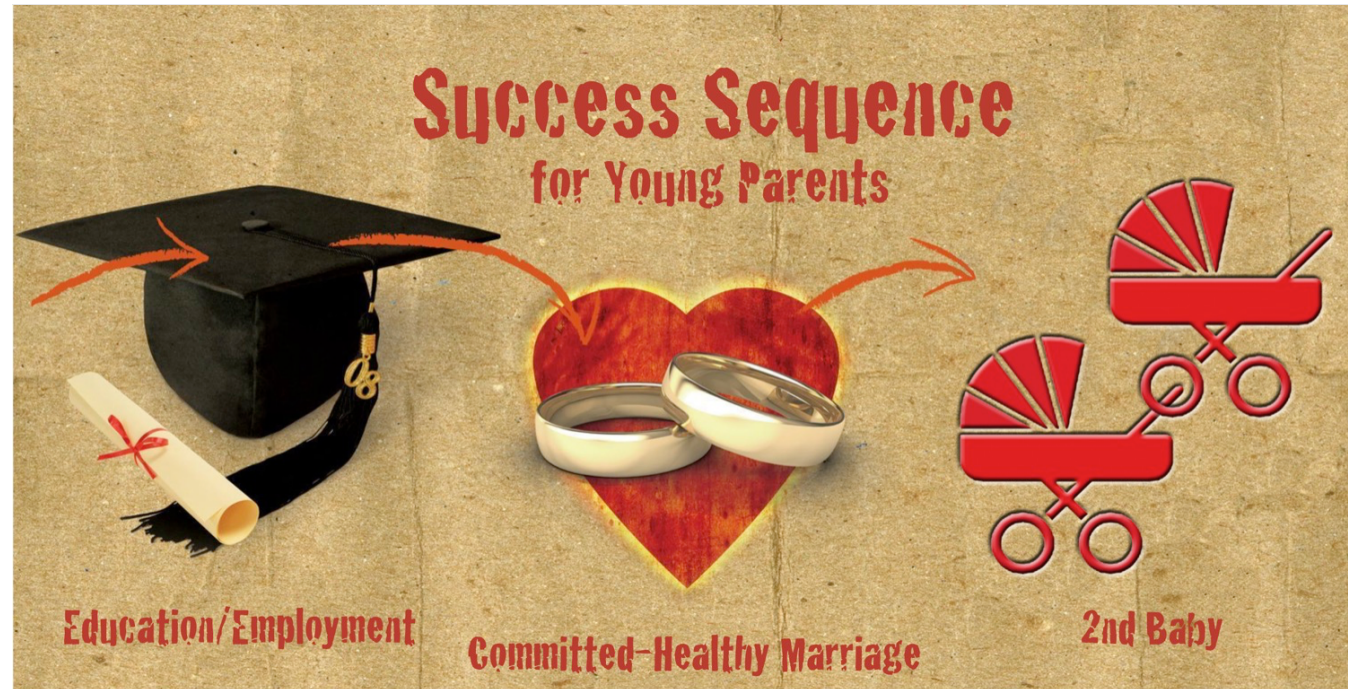
Why marriage matters to youth



The Success Sequence

The order in which youth do major life tasks matters.

Why marriage matters to youth

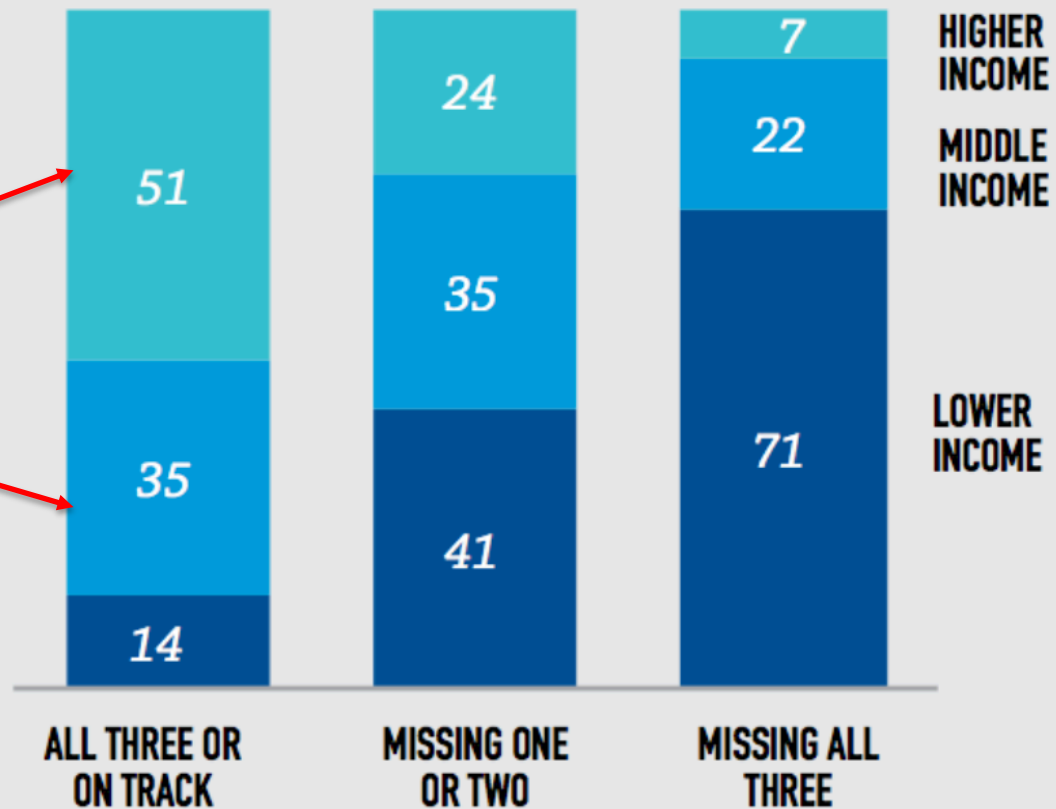


The order in which youth do major life tasks matters.

More than 8 in 10 Millennials who followed the “success sequence” or are “on track” are in the middle or higher income group

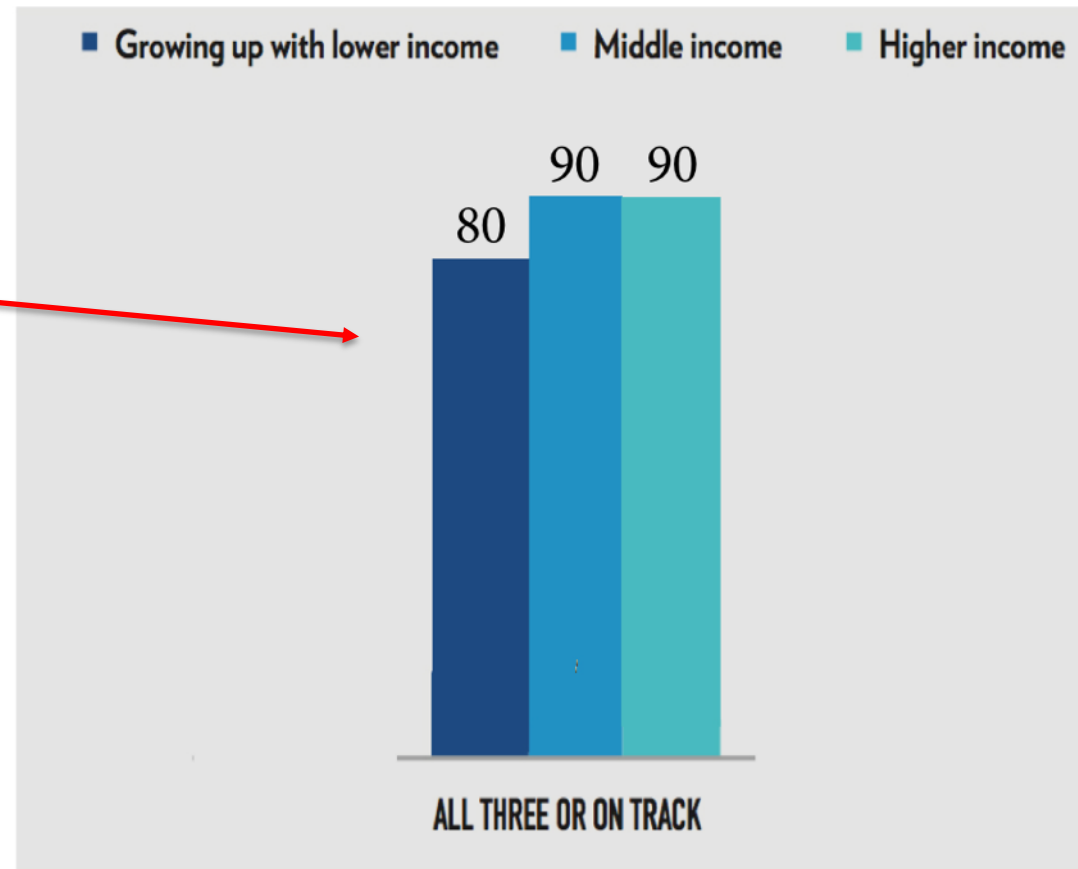
% of adults ages 28-34 in each income bracket

86%



The Success Sequence makes a difference for lower-income, young adults.

80% of young adults who grew up in low-income families, and followed the sequence or stayed on track, are in the middle or higher income level by age 28-34.



Why marriage matters to children

Scholars tell us that, based on family resources, children of married parents may have more:

- Parents with more time, energy, maturity
- Money
- Stability
- Family and other networks
- Role models

Future of Children Report – Spring 2020



Why marriage matters to children

Children of married mothers who are in their early to mid 20s or who earned a high school diploma:

- Will more frequently graduate from high school
- Have a greater chance of avoiding poverty

National Marriage Project – Brad Wilcox



Why marriage matters to children

Children raised in **unstable conditions** are more likely to:

- Be physically and sexually abused
- Engage in problematic behaviors
- Show poor social development
- Have lower educational attainment
- Demonstrate poorer cognitive development
- Suffer a wealth penalty as adults



Urban Institute - Exploring Instability and Children's Well-Being

Why marriage matters to children

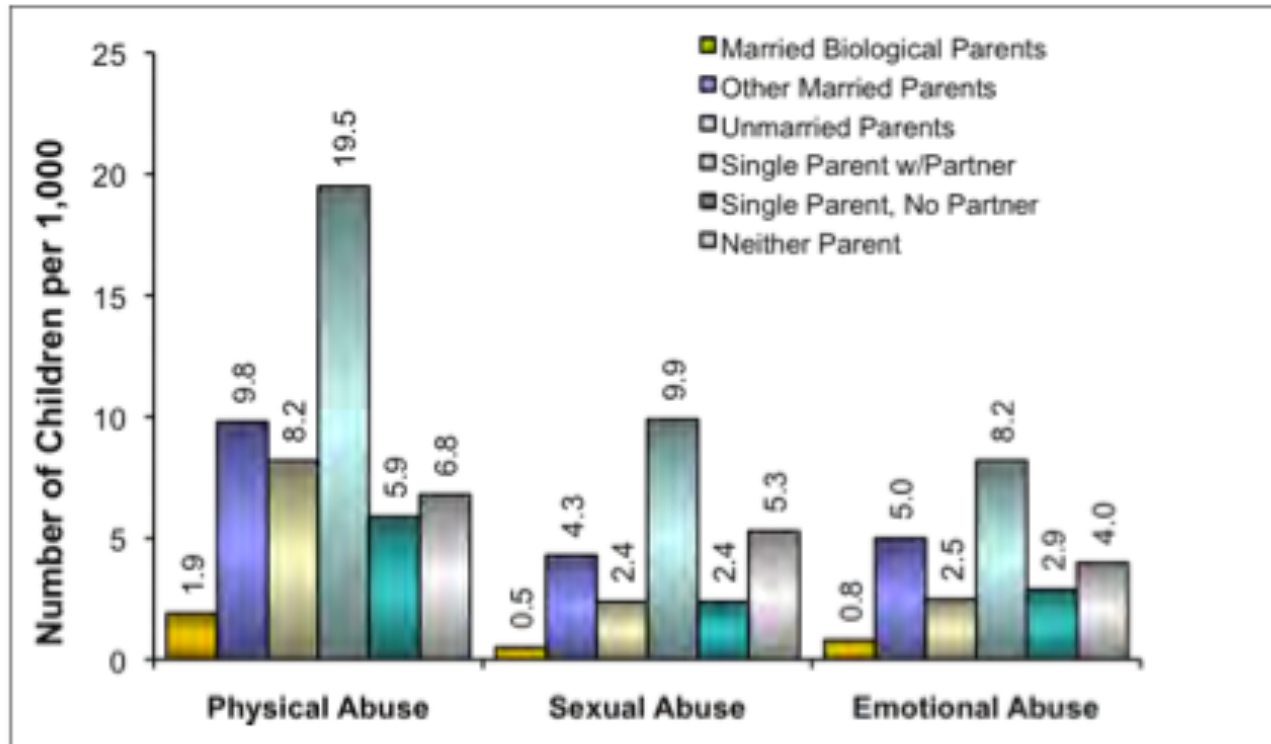


Figure 5–2. Incidence of Harm Standard Abuse by Family Structure and Living Arrangement.

Fourth National Incidence Study of Child Abuse and Neglect (2010)



So we start to see a more nuanced picture...

- **Married relationships tend to be more stable; children need stability.**



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- **Married people often have more time, money, and networks; these give children advantages.**



So we start to see a more nuanced picture...

- Married relationships tend to be more stable; children need stability.
- Married people often have more time, money, and networks; these give children advantages.
- **In general, being raised by two parents in a healthy, safe, and stable relationship leads to better outcomes for children.**



So we start to see a more nuanced picture...

- Married relationships tend to be more stable; children need stability.
- Married people often have more time, money, and networks; these give children advantages.
- In general, being raised by two parents in a healthy, safe, and stable relationship leads to better outcomes for children.
- **That said.... poverty, racism, inequality, parent's education, trauma, as well as neighborhood and school quality, also impact outcomes for children.**



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How can I help young people gain agency in their intimate relationships?

You can help young people with facts and concrete guidance.



Benefits of Relationship Education

- Develop agency in intimate relationships
 - Prevent unplanned pregnancy
 - Decrease dating violence
 - Sexual abuse prevention
 - Build social and emotional competence
 - Avoid ACEs in children
- Strengthen employability skills



Healthy relationship education...

reduces the risk of teen pregnancy by

46%



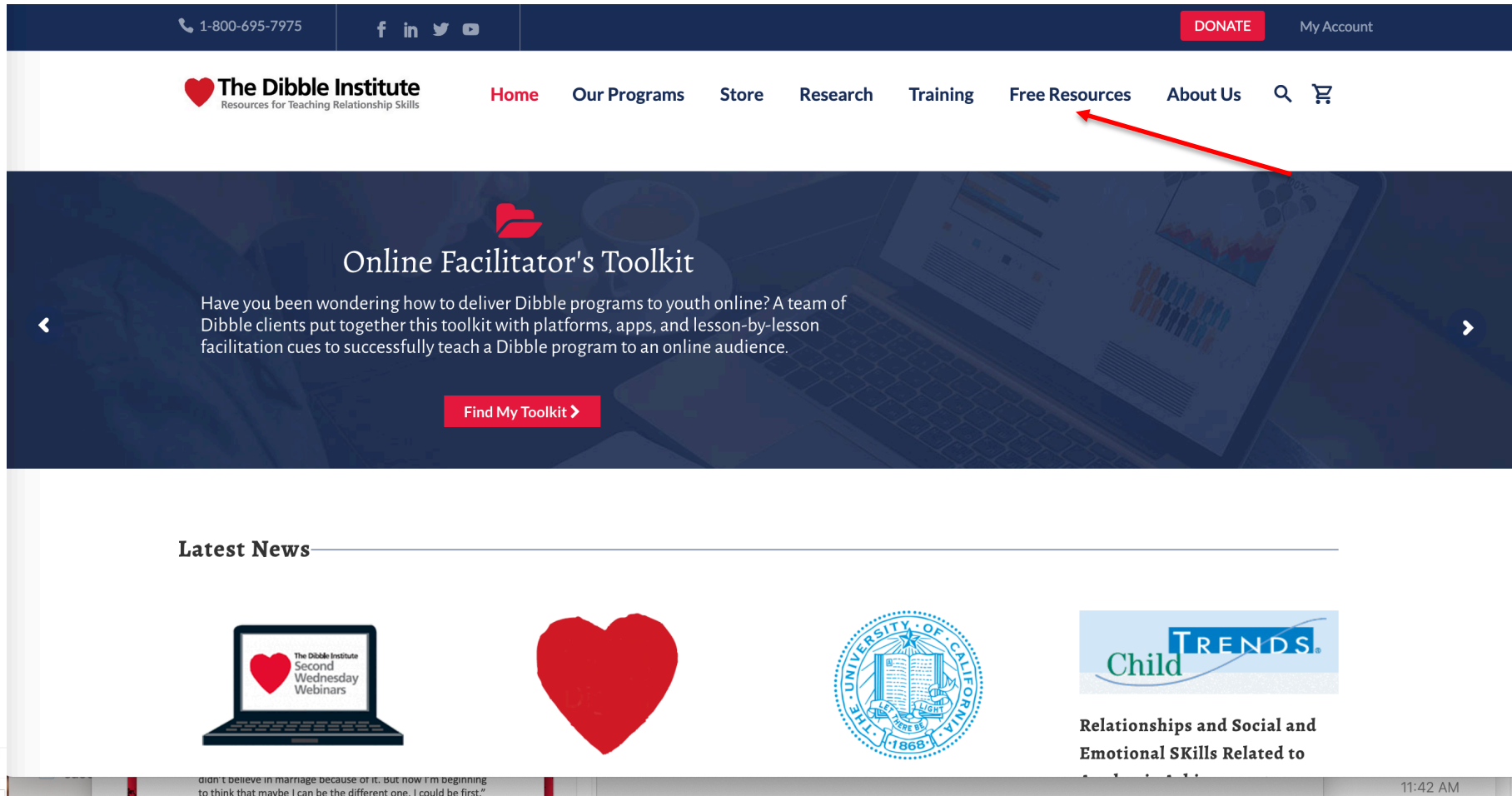
significantly reduces verbal aggression and violence in teens

helps young people exit unhealthy and dangerous relationships



reduces faulty relationship beliefs and helps youth direct their own love lives

Dibble offers many free resources for you to use.




The screenshot shows the website's navigation bar with the following items: Home, Our Programs, Store, Research, Training, Free Resources (highlighted with a red arrow), and About Us. Below the navigation bar is a banner for the 'Online Facilitator's Toolkit' with a red folder icon and a 'Find My Toolkit' button. The 'Latest News' section features four items: a laptop with 'The Dibble Institute Second Wednesday Webinars', a large red heart, the University of California seal, and a 'Child TRENDS' logo with the text 'Relationships and Social and Emotional Skills Related to'.

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Resources for Teaching Relationship Skills


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Online Facilitator's Toolkit


Have you been wondering how to deliver Dibble programs to youth online? A team of Dibble clients put together this toolkit with platforms, apps, and lesson-by-lesson facilitation cues to successfully teach a Dibble program to an online audience.


[Find My Toolkit >](#)

Latest News

 The Dibble Institute
Second
Wednesday
Webinars





 **Child TRENDS**

Relationships and Social and Emotional Skills Related to

What youth say about Dibble programs

- “No one in my family has a marriage that stayed together. I didn’t believe in marriage because of it. But now I’m beginning to think that maybe I can be the different one, I could be first.”
- “Who I end up with is not just someone I’m feeling; it needs to be someone I would want my kids to be raised by.”
- “This is the first program I have ever been a part of that gave us a chance to sit down and talk about it (LGBTQ issues).”
- “Mister, all this information makes me not want to be in a relationship; relationships are a lot more complicated than they seem.”









Questions?



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Thank You for Joining Us Today!



There is a brief survey after the end of this webinar. Thank you for providing us feedback by completing this survey.

The webinar will be available in 3 days:

<https://www.dibbleinstitute.org/free-resources/webinars/>

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Second Wednesday Webinar

February 10, 2021

Preventing Dating Violence

**by Helping Students Choose Healthy Relationships
and Build Social/Emotional Skills**

Jeff Landers and Tiffany Storm

Education Specialists, Women in Need, Greenville, Texas