

For release: [Date]

Local contact: [local organizer, email and phone number]

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February 7-14
National Marriage Week USA
Let's Strengthen Marriage

There is hope for marriage! Strengthen marriages - yours and others' starting with National Marriage Week USA—February 7 to 14th -encourage marriage, reduce divorce rates, curtail poverty, and benefit children-

[Fill in CITY, STATE.] Local groups are collaborating to launch marriage-strengthening initiatives, according to [cite a pastor, leader, or local official and their title.] This effort is in response to the call by International Marriage Week (<http://www.marriage-weekinternational.com/>) and National Marriage Week organizers in a number of countries, including the USA (www.NationalMarriageWeekUSA.org) for the mobilization of hundreds of diverse organizations. By drawing attention to the importance of strong marriages and proven ways to do so, we hope to stimulate new efforts to reduce the divorce rate and build stronger marriages, which in turn can help curtail poverty and benefit children.

[list specific events, dates, locations, and contact/registration information]

National Marriage Week has long been an organized celebration in the UK, Germany, Ireland, Australia, the Czech Republic, and elsewhere internationally (<http://www.marriage-weekinternational.com/>) with large rallies, resolutions and celebrations in Parliaments, concerted efforts for marriage education, and more. National Marriage Week USA provides a “Tool Kit” for local outreach (under the “Get Involved” heading at www.NationalMarriageWeekUSA.org), in addition to a clearinghouse of trusted curricula, and a national calendar of events. (Please POST your event for free.)

Chuck Stetson, chairman of National Marriage Week USA says “The alarming drop in marriage rates in America combined with high divorce rates are costly to the nation—financially costly to taxpayers and individuals, and emotionally costly to children. We all need to work together to turn the tide...”

“Marriage works,” says NMWUSA executive director Sheila Weber. “Research shows that marriage makes people happier, live longer, and build more economic security. Children with married parents perform better in school. There are proven ways to repair and restore marriages—but most folks don’t know where to go to get the help they need.”

Recent statistics are alarming. A Marriage Index, released jointly by the National Center on African American Marriages and Parenting (NCAAMP) and the Institute for American Values in October 2009, reveals a huge decline in national marriage indicators. One indicator shows 78 percent of adults were married in 1970, while only 57 percent of adults were married in 2008. Another indicator shows 40 percent of all children in America are now born out of wedlock in 2008; and 72 percent of African American children are now born without married parents.

“We want to get the word out about how anyone and everyone can participate in National Marriage Week USA,” says Weber. Resources in the **NationalMarriageWeekUSA.org** “**TOOL KIT**” (under the “Get Involved” heading) include:

- Pastors and churches can launch new marriage classes, sermon series, or host a major weekend marriage conference,
- Date Night Events: Ideas and Broadcasts
- Mayor and Governor Proclamations for National Marriage Week USA,
- Free webinars featuring national leaders. Go to www.marriageweek.org
- Marriage tips brochures. Place them in doctor’s offices, hair salons, and other businesses,
- Community Marriage Policies, where local clergy work together (cities with CMPs have lowered divorce rates),
- Public Service Announcements (PSA) you can record for local radio
- Advertisements for “Penny Savers” or local newspapers.
- Schools can sponsor assemblies on healthy relationship skills.
- Renewal of Vows ceremony
- Most importantly, work on our own marriages—with lots of ideas and resources for where to go for help at www.nationalmarriageweekUSA.org.

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