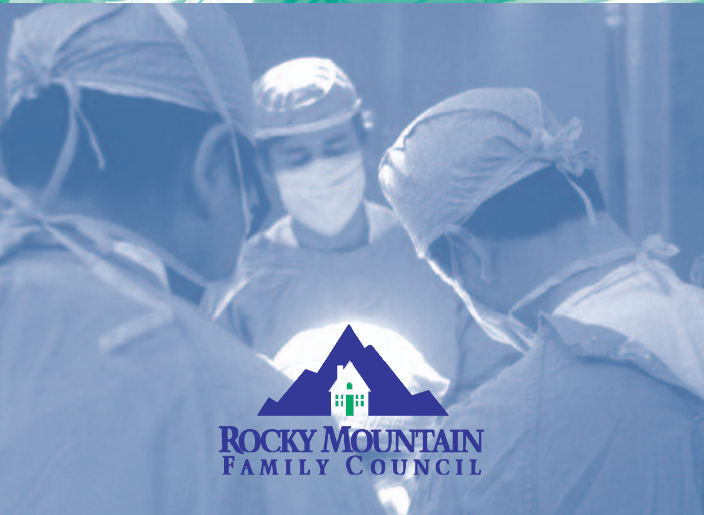
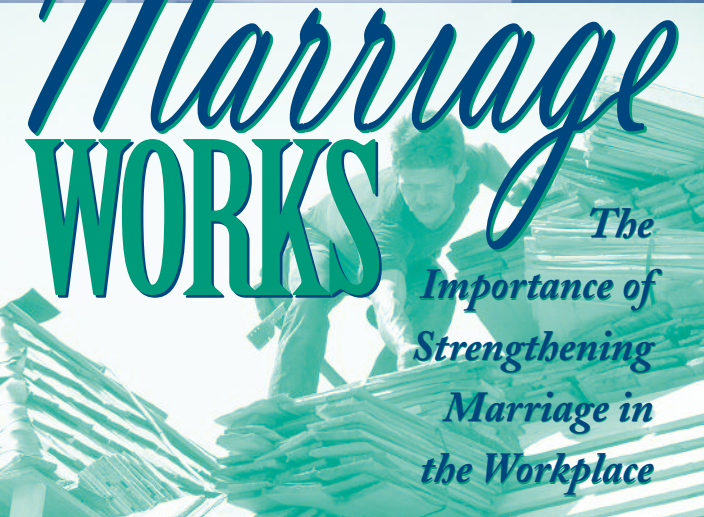




Marriage WORKS

*The
Importance of
Strengthening
Marriage in
the Workplace*



**ROCKY MOUNTAIN
FAMILY COUNCIL**

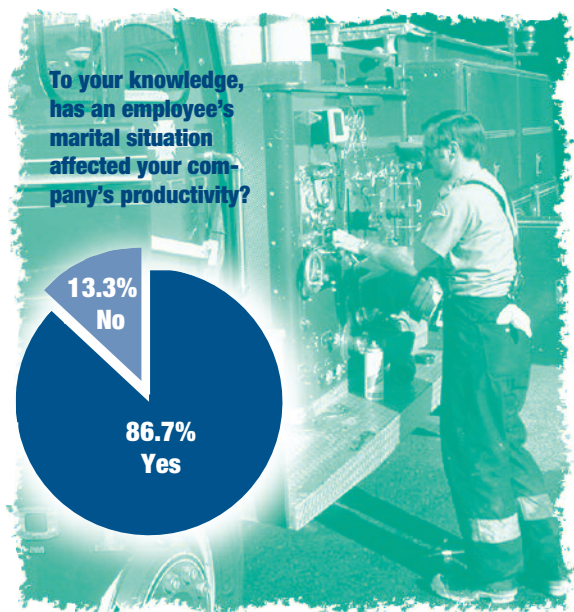
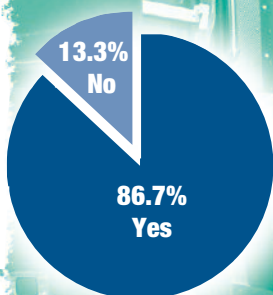
In a recent Rocky Mountain Family Council survey, 20 Colorado businesses were interviewed about their views on marriage and its impact on the workplace. **One hundred percent of the companies surveyed believed that strengthening marriage would impact their bottom line**, but few knew what could or should be done about it. More than 85 percent (86.7), believed an employee's marital situation has affected their company's productivity. It is evident that corporate America has an economic interest in helping employees have successful marriages.

The FACTS:

- In a national sample of men who were married 10 years or less, days of work lost due to marital problems resulted in financial losses to American companies. "Based on the average earnings of participants, work loss associated with marital problems translates into a loss of approximately \$6.8 billion per year."¹

- The Ohio Psychological Association conducted a survey of executives of small businesses and found a link between troubled marriages and work loss. "Fifty-seven percent of the executives reported that productivity at the workplace had suf-

**To your knowledge,
has an employee's
marital situation
affected your com-
pany's productivity?**



ferred due to employees' personal and emotional problems, and 42 percent reported that marital distress and divorce had 'a very negative impact on workplace productivity.'" ²

• Research by Dr. Scott Stanley and Howard Markman at the University of Denver suggests that "marital intervention targeted at the 20 percent with the most marital distress could increase productivity..." ³

The CAUSE:

Dr. Scott Stanley at the University of Denver gives five reasons that cause marriages to dissolve. Businesses can help to strengthen marriage by providing employees with tools to reduce the effects of these marital disrupters — marriage at an early age, cohabitation/previously divorced, lack of communication skills, unrealistic expectations of marriage, and sexual problems.

The SOLUTION:

The Marriage Works Project helps the business community strengthen marriage through four steps:

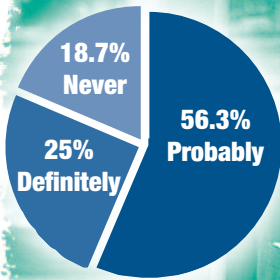
STEP 1: Adopt a Marriage Impact Statement

*Supporting marriage provides direct
payback to your business.*

COLORADO MARRIAGE IMPACT STATEMENT FOR BUSINESS

(Name of Company) will provide a work environment that supports the institution of marriage. To the best of our ability, we will offer a culture that strengthens marriages of our employees.

• Research by The Conference Board suggests that the reason a company promotes marriage is the calculated return on investment. "As Allen Bergerson, director of personnel policy development at Eastman Kodak, notes: 'In 1987, when our work-family task force proposed implementation of our family-supportive policies, management asked what the rate of return could be expected on the investment. I responded that the savings or return could not be substantiated, but that the problems we were attempting to solve were costing more than the proposed investment, and that we were more than confident that the return would exceed the costs of the programs. Nothing has occurred since to shake that confidence.'" ⁴



Would you be willing to offer programs to your employees that would improve their marital relationships?

STEP 2: Market Strong Marriages From Within

Expand your company's programs to include:

- Employee Assistance Programs that offer marital counseling services. "...[C]orporations may find that employee assistance programs that promote family stability are a cost-efficient means of maintaining and even improving productivity."⁵

- Partner with diversity and Total Quality Management programs to reach your employees through marriage enrichment programs and other services that support marriage.

STEP 3: Update Policies and Programs

Help to reduce the five reasons marriages dissolve by:

- Providing marriage enrichment programs for employees.
- Implementing intervention programs that educate couples on various skills for preventing marital distress and enhancing their relationships.⁶ Research suggests that marital intervention programs could recoup productivity that was lost, a benefit that far outweighs the costs of implementing such a program.⁷

- Incorporating marriage-friendly policies. For instance, discourage overnight travel that takes employees away from family and places them in an uncomfortable or compromising situation.

- Providing salary and benefits policies that provide financial incentives that encourage marriage. For instance, offer relocation packages to help a spouse find employment.

STEP 4: Get Started

Can your business afford to wait?

- RMFC will help answer your questions in more detail and provide you with the tools you need to launch the Marriage Works Project at your company. See our Web site at www.marriageproject.org.

- Schedule a marriage enrichment or communication skills workshop onsite by calling Jim Chapman (303-292-1800) at Rocky Mountain Family Council.

- Sign a Marriage Impact Statement and become one of the many companies across Colorado recognizing the importance of supporting marriage in the workplace.

Rocky Mountain Family Council

Rocky Mountain Family Council (RMFC) is a nonprofit educational ministry which researches the causes of marital and family breakdown and advocates in the public arena for policies that support marriage and family.

- RMFC will work to create awareness among the business community about the importance of strengthening marriage in the workplace.

- RMFC will provide resources to employers to strengthen marriage in the workplace.

- RMFC will provide employers with access to various marriage enrichment workshops, business policies and other company programs supporting marriage.

*Special thanks to Amy Jewett Sampson
for providing the research cited in this brochure.*

Endnotes

1 Forthofer, Melinda; Markman, Howard; Cox, Martha; Stanley, Scott; and Kessler, Ronald; *Journal of Marriage and the Family* 58 (August 1996), page 597.

2 Ibid., page 597

3 *Journal of Marriage and the Family* 58, page 598.

4 The Conference Board, "Linking Work-Family Issues to the Bottom Line," Report 962, 1991, page 11.

5 *Journal of Marriage and the Family* 58, page 598.

6 *Journal of Marriage and the Family* 58, page 604.

7 Ibid.

What Business Executives Say About Marriage:

In business, we carry around this imaginary bucket. Each problem that occurs during the day adds another hole to the bucket. By the end of the day, it's drained and if left empty, it's tough to be productive at work the next day. I am blessed to be married to a wonderful woman, who completely supports me and refills my bucket.

—Scott Bemis, publisher of *The Denver Business Journal*

When the family is the focal point, the strength of the marriage, the self-esteem of children, and overall cohesiveness of a family grows, benefiting not only the family but the employer as well.

—John Bandimere III, general manager, *Bandimere Speedway*

It seems that the fabric of a strong marriage gives texture, color and strength to that of a good business career.

—Wes Segawa, chairman, *Arrow Electronics, Inc. Pemco Group*

My wife is very supportive and encouraging of me and the agency and it helps keep my attitude up. I can't imagine being in business in the capacity I'm in without being married.

—Bill Pierson, cofounder, *Pierson Hawkins Advertising Agency*

Being in the restaurant industry, I've seen firsthand the instability and difficult situations that result from broken marriages, as opposed to the stability and increased earning power that comes from solid marriages.

—Charles Wilson, owner, *White Fence Farm*

Successful marriages among employees are reflected in the profits of a successful company. These employees are more productive, focused, and more confident in their jobs, which carries over to the profitability of any company.

—Barb Harwell, principal, *Denver Architectural Precast Inc.*