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National Marriage Week USA Kicks Off to Turn Tide

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Pro-family and faith-based organizations across the United States marked the start of National Marriage Week on Sunday to draw special attention on the need to strengthen marriage and the ways to do it.

From Feb. 7 until Feb. 14, marriage advocates will make strategic and concerted efforts to bring about change in the United States as marriage-related statistics show declines in many areas, including the percentage of married adults and the percentage of children born out of wedlock.

According to a report released last year by the National Center on African American Marriages and Parenting (NCAAMP) and the Institute for American Values, only 57 percent of adults were married in 2008, compared to the 78 percent that were married in 1970.

The percentage of children in America who were born out of wedlock, meanwhile, was 40 in 2008 – 72 percent, when only counting African American children.

“The alarming drop in marriage rates in America combined with high divorce rates are costly to the nation,” says Chuck Stetson, chairman of National Marriage Week USA. “The nation needs to pay attention.”

To help turn the tide, National Marriage Week USA participants will be initiating new efforts to reduce the divorce rate and build a stronger marriage culture, which in turn will help curtail poverty and benefits children.

Conferences, seminars, retreats, date nights, contests, and classes are among the slew of special events that will be held across the nation, many of which will be organized and spearheaded by local churches.

“If we can help couples learn how to create loving, supportive marriages, it will not only bring marital satisfaction, but will enrich the lives of children, and create a more productive society,” says marriage expert Gary Chapman, best-selling author of *Five Love Language*.

“Every couple can contribute to the solution,” he adds. “It begins by reading books, attending classes, and having productive communication with your own spouse.”

To help organizations of all types join in the effort, National Marriage Week organizers have provided a listing of events nationwide in their website, www.NationalMarriageWeekUSA.org, as well as links to marriage resources, other marriage initiatives, and available courses, among others.

Participants can also find out how to host a screening of the hit faith-based movie “Fireproof,” which has been widely touted as a marriage saver and strengthener.

“I am excited about the efforts of National Marriage Week USA to pull together business, government, and religious organizations to draw attention to solutions to the current problems created by divorce,” says Chapman.

The weeklong campaign, which is expected to run on the same set of dates each year, concludes on Valentine’s Day.

Eric Young
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