



HOW STATES CAN STRENGTHEN MARRIAGE & FAMILIES

THE PATH TO IMPROVING A STATE'S RANKING IN THE FAMILY STRUCTURE INDEX

One thing must be clear: there is no easy path out of this crisis. Our nation didn't get to this point over night, and getting back on track will not happen quickly. However, restoring a hope and a future for our children is possible. It starts with a commitment to addressing the root cause driving the challenges in our communities—the decline of marriage and the collapse of family. Changing course requires both Church and State solutions.

STATE SOLUTIONS

1) ELIMINATE MARRIAGE PENALTIES:

State legislatures should direct state government agencies to detail any marriage penalties associated with taxes and programs run by the state and look for ways to eliminate obstacles to marriage.

2) EMPOWER YOUTH WITH THE SUCCESS SEQUENCE:

Research from the Brookings Institute has proven if students graduate high school, get a job, and get married before having kids, it is nearly impossible to live in poverty. States should require schools teach the Success Sequence in public schools.

3) CELEBRATE MARRIAGE:

States should create a public education focused on increasing the marriage rate and promoting the benefits of strong and stable marriages.



READ
THE FULL REPORT AT:
CCV.org/Hope

CHURCH SOLUTIONS

1) EXPAND MARRIAGE AND FAMILY MINISTRY:

Churches that emphasize marriage and family not only meet the needs of their congregants, but research from *Communio*, a nonprofit that equips churches to evangelize through the renewal of healthy relationships, marriages, and the family, has shown this emphasis contributes to church growth.

2) CELEBRATE MARRIAGE:

Churches should be very clear about underlining the value of a marriage and family life. Couples who attend religious services together are significantly more likely to be happily and stably married.

3) PREACH WHAT IS TRUE AND BEAUTIFUL:

Marriage is the most common pathway for the faithful to grow in holiness and happiness. Accordingly, churches should routinely proclaim an inspiring vision of marriage where the beauty, goodness, power, and difficulties of marriage and family life can be shared in age-appropriate ways to the entire congregation.

Center for
Christian
Virtue



Institute
for
**family
studies**