

United Way of Jackson County

2006 Marriage Survey



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The 2006 United Way of Jackson County Marriage Survey included 41 questions about community attitudes toward marriage, attitudes toward readiness, counseling, in-school skills and learning, understanding community needs, and demographic information. A total of 400 surveys were completed by Jackson area residents in October 2006.

- Of the 400 respondents who completed the survey, 50.3% of respondents were male, and 49.7% were female.
- Over thirty percent (31.0%) of respondents were age 45-64.
- Twenty percent (17.8%) of respondents have a household income of \$50,000-\$74,999.
- Four-fifths of respondents (82.5%) answered "White/Caucasian" when asked to name their primary ethnic background.
- Nearly one-quarter of respondents (23.7%) live in the 49203 ZIP code.
- Two-thirds of respondents (67.0%) do not have children under 18 living in their household.
- Two-thirds (65.1%) of respondents with children under 18 live in a two parent household.
- Over half of respondents with children under 18 (57.4%) have both biological parents living in the household.
- Ninety percent of male respondents with children under 18 (93.0%) contact their child daily.
- One-third of respondents (34.5%) attend religious services once a week.
- Of the 400 respondents, 190 were married (47.5%), 108 were single (27.0%), 65 were divorced (16.3%), and 36 were widowed (9.0%).



Executive Summary - con't.

- Half of the respondents (53.0%) agreed that family is the main building block to a healthy community.
- Forty percent of respondents (42.8%) agree that people who have children together ought to be married.
- Half of the respondents (52.5%) agreed that it is important for couples to prepare for marriage through educational classes, workshops, or counseling.
- When asked if living together before marriage improved chances for a good marriage, nearly equal numbers of respondents agreed with the statement (37.5%) as disagreed (36.0%).
- Two-thirds of respondents (61.3%) agreed that the Jackson area is a good place to be married.
- When asked if they agreed that a household with a married couple is more financially stable than one with a couple who is not married, half of the respondents (50.3%) “agree.”
- Over half of the respondents (53.8%) “agree” that children are impacted financially in a negative way by divorce.
- Over half of all respondents (53.5%) agreed that married people should get a divorce if they no longer love each other, even if they have children.
- Over fifty-five percent of respondents (55.2%) agreed that divorce was a good way to start over.
- The top three words describing a healthy marriage named by respondents were “love” (63.5%), “trust” (39.5%), and “commitment” (16.0%).
- The top three words describing an unhealthy marriage were “infidelity” (22.3%), “dishonest” (20.5%), and “distrust” (19.0%).
- Two-thirds of single respondents (63.9%) are not living with someone with whom they are having a romantic relationship.
- Two-thirds of single or widowed respondents (63.2%) plan to get married in the future.



- Sixty-five percent of married respondents (64.3%) would classify their marriage as “5/healthy.”
- Married respondents were asked how someone they knew very well would rate the importance of their marriage and over half of respondents (56.8%) answered “extremely important.”
- Only five percent (5.3%) of married respondents have sought assistance to strengthen their relationship in the past year.
- Eighty percent (80.0%) of respondents who sought counseling in the past year were satisfied with the assistance.
- Over one-third of respondents (37.4%) got married between the ages of 18 and 22.
- Ninety percent of respondents (87.4%) said pregnancy was not a factor in their decision to get married.
- Seventy percent of divorced respondents (70.8%) have been married one time.
- Sixty percent (61.5%) of divorced respondents are not living with someone with whom they’re having a romantic relationship.
- Half of the respondents (50.7%) said a lack of commitment by one or both persons contributed to their divorce.
- Too much conflict and arguing contributed to 38.5% of respondents’ divorces.
- When asked whether infidelity contributed to their divorce, thirty-nine respondents (60.0%) said it did not.
- Three-quarters of respondents (72.3%) said getting married too young did not contribute to their divorce.
- Three-quarters (75.4%) of respondents said financial problems did not contribute to their divorce.
- Four-fifths of respondents (81.5%) said domestic violence did not contribute to their divorce.



Executive Summary - con't.

- Ninety percent (87.7%) of respondents said having little or no helpful pre-marital preparation did not contribute to their divorce.
- No divorced respondents said religious differences contributed to their divorce.
- Ninety percent (90.7%) of respondents said a lack of support from family members did not contribute to their divorce.
- Just over half of respondents (52.3%) did not seek services in the areas that contributed to their divorce.
- Two-thirds (66.2%) of divorced respondents did not wish they themselves had worked harder to save their marriage.
- Sixty percent of respondents (58.5%) wished their spouse had worked harder to save their marriage.
- Seventy-five percent (75.4%) of respondents said there were no services in Jackson County that could've helped them remain married.
- Half of the respondents (51.3%) had no organizations come to mind that provide marriage or relationship assistance.
- When asked where they would send someone they knew looking for help with marital issues, 42.0% of respondents answered "counseling."
- Eighty percent (80.3%) of respondents had not heard of the Healthy Marriage Initiative in Jackson County.



Scott Schmidt, Full Circle Development Coordinator at the United Way of Jackson County, has requested that Perspectives Consulting Group, Inc. assist the United Way of Jackson County and the marriage coalition in understanding community attitudes and perceptions about marriage and reducing the divorce rate.

A telephone survey was selected as the most appropriate method to meet the needs of the United Way of Jackson County and the marriage coalition. Some objectives for this survey include:

- Identify community attitudes and perceptions about marriage and divorce in Jackson County
- Measure awareness of counseling and other services designed to strengthen families and marriages in Jackson County
- Measure community understanding of the impact of marriage and divorce on Jackson County residents
- Investigate if community members would support initiatives like counseling, and in-school skills training to strengthen marriages and reduce the divorce rate in Jackson County

There are two main sections to the report, **Survey Results** and **Conclusions**. The **Survey Results** include the responses to all of the survey questions, generally grouped into categories. The **Conclusions** section outlines some of the implications of the research based upon the survey findings.

In addition to this report, a statistical reference book has been prepared. The statistical reference book, which includes the survey results analyzed by a number of different variables such as gender, household income, and ZIP code, has been compiled. This reference book is not intended to be read from cover to cover, but to be used like an encyclopedia to look up additional information about a certain topic or survey question.





The United Way of Jackson County 2006 Marriage Survey consisted of 41 questions. The survey included questions about community attitudes toward marriage, attitudes toward readiness, counseling, in-school skills and learning, understanding community needs and some general demographic information. The information gathered from the survey will be used to help plan effective and efficient methods of encouraging marriage and impacting the divorce rate in Jackson County.

In addition, basic demographic information was gathered. The questions included various types of formats including yes/no, open-ended response, and pre-defined choices. The survey was developed based on input from the United Way of Jackson County. Perspectives Consulting Group, Inc. assembled and ordered the survey questions. The survey instrument is included for reference in the **Appendices**.

The survey was conducted with residents of Jackson County. A total of 400 completed surveys were obtained from residents living in Jackson County. Surveys were completed in the following prefixes: 522, 524, 529, 531, 536, 592, 750, 764, 768, 769, 782, 783, 784, 787, 788, 789, 796, and 841.

Households were randomly selected and contacted until 400 surveys were completed. A total of 3,793 calls were made to obtain the 400 completions from all prefixes. Surveys were only completed with adults age 18 or over.

The survey interviewing took place in October 2006, between the hours of 6:00 p.m. and 9:00 p.m. on weekdays. A pretest of 43 surveys was completed, with no significant difficulties or problems noted. These pretest surveys are included in the final results. The survey took approximately five minutes to complete.

Based on the number of households in Jackson County, and the number of survey completions, a confidence level and confidence interval can be calculated. In statistical terms, the confidence level is the likelihood that if the survey were replicated, the results would be the same. The confidence level for this survey was 95 percent, meaning that 95 times out of 100, this survey would produce substantially the same results as achieved this time.

Survey Instrument

Survey Execution



Survey Execution - con't.

The confidence interval is the range that any answer could vary from the actual value. This is the “+/- xxx percent” margin of error value that pollsters reference. In this case, the United Way of Jackson County 2006 Marriage Survey has a confidence interval of +/- 5 percent. Therefore, the answer to any question on the survey is within plus, or minus 5 percent of the actual value. When comparing two responses to the same question, any difference of less than 10 percent needs to be examined carefully, since statistically the difference could be considered negligible.

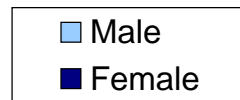
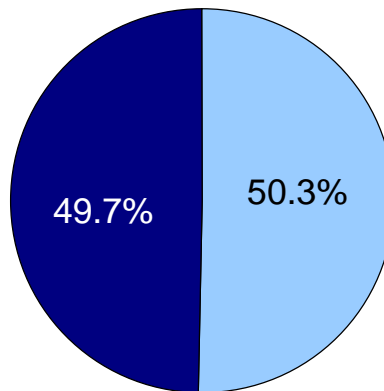
On several of the survey questions, the results are averaged to make a “score” or “composite” for sub-categories. For example, on a question rating the healthiness of respondents’ marriage, scores are calculated for sub-categories such as age (18 to 34, 35 to 49, 50 to 64, and 65 and older) or gender (male, female). Each of these sub-categories is then compared with the other sub-categories and the overall results using a statistical test known as a t-test.

T-tests measure each individual sub-category (for example, gender) against the overall average for all survey respondents and determine which sub-categories are significantly different at a 95 percent confidence level. T-tests take into account how many people are in each sub-category, the amount of variation among people, and the actual results. These components determine the confidence interval for each sub-category, the range which we are 95 percent certain the score belongs. When the sub-category is outside of the range, then we can say this sub-category is significantly different from the overall average.

When looking at the difference between two sub-categories, it is important to judge the difference between their results relative to the spread or variability of the results. Two sub-categories may have the same result, but their ranges or the variability of their results will determine whether those results are significantly different from the overall average.



Of the 400 respondents who completed the survey, 50.3% of respondents were male, and 49.7% were female.



Respondent Profile

Chart 1
Gender

Over thirty percent (31.0%) of respondents were age 45-64, while 28.8% of respondents were age 18-34. Two respondents (0.4%) did not provide their age.

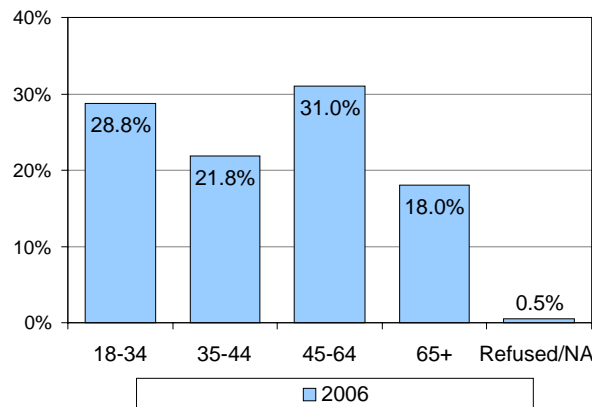


Chart 2
Age

Just under twenty percent (17.8%) of respondents have a household income of \$50,000-\$74,999, while 16.5% of respondents answered \$35,000-\$49,999. Fifty-five respondents (13.7%) did not provide their household income.

	% Respondents
Less than \$15,000	6.0%
\$15,000-\$24,999	13.7%
\$25,000-\$34,999	13.3%
\$35,000-\$49,999	16.5%
\$50,000-\$74,999	17.8%
\$75,000-\$99,999	13.7%
\$100,000 and over	5.3%
Refused/NA	13.7%

Chart 3
Household Income



Respondent Profile - con't.

Four-fifths of respondents (82.5%) answered "White/Caucasian" when asked what their primary ethnic background was, and 12.5% of respondents chose "African American/Black." Seven respondents (1.7%) did not answer.

Chart 4
Ethnic Background

Ethnic Background	% Respondents
White/Caucasian	82.5%
African American/Black	12.5%
Hispanic	1.7%
Asian or Pacific Islander	0.5%
American Indian/Native American	0.8%
Multicultural	0.3%
Unsure/NA	1.7%

Chart 5
ZIP Code

ZIP Code	% Respondents
49201	22.0%
49202	13.3%
49203	23.7%
49230	10.7%
49240	4.3%
49254	2.8%
49269	3.3%
Other	18.2%
Refused/NA	1.7%

Nearly one-quarter of respondents (23.7%) live in the 49203 ZIP code, while 22.0% live in the 49201 ZIP code. Seventy-three respondents (18.2%) named a ZIP code not listed in the chart. Their responses are listed below:

8 Respondents

49277
49283

7 Respondents

49204
49234
49237
49246
49284



6 Respondents
49259
49272

5 Respondents
49241

2 Respondents
49261

1 Respondent
49220
49232
49254

Respondent Profile - con't.

Two-thirds of respondents (67.0%) do not have any children under the age of 18 living in their household, while 32.3% have a child under 18 in the house. Three respondents (0.7%) did not provide this information.

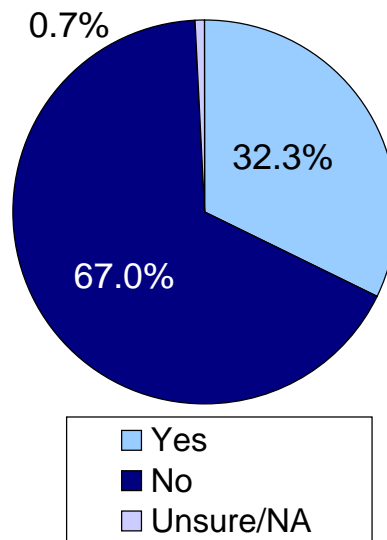


Chart 6
Children Under 18 in Household

The 129 respondents with children under 18 in their household were asked if they lived in a one or two parent household. Two-thirds of respondents (65.1%) live in a two parent household, while 28.7% live in a one parent household. Eight respondents (6.2%) declined to give this information.

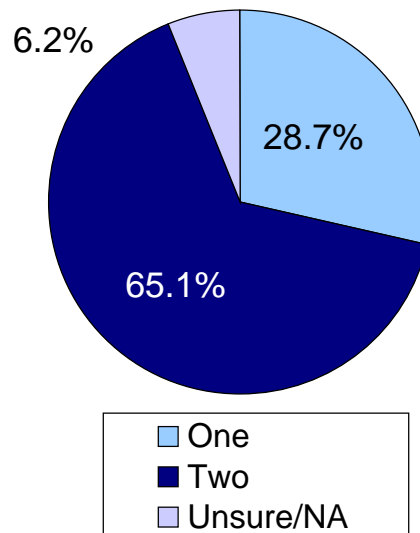


Chart 7
Parents in Household



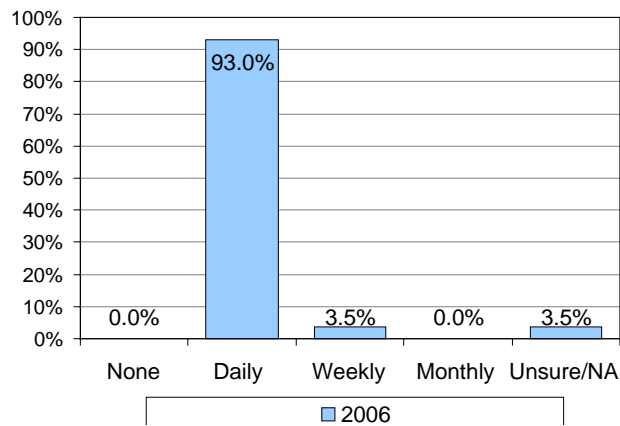
Respondent Profile - con't.

Chart 8 Family in Household

Family in Household	% Respondents
Yes - Both biological mother and father	57.4%
No - Only biological mother	27.1%
No - Only biological father	12.4%
No - Neither biological parent/adopted	2.3%
Unsure/NA	0.8%

The 129 respondents with children under 18 in their household were asked, "Are both the biological mother and father of the children living in the household?" Over half of respondents (57.4%) have both biological parents living in the household, while just over one-quarter of respondents (27.1%) only had the biological mother living in the household. One respondent (0.8%) did not answer.

Chart 9 Contact with Children



Only the male respondents with children under 18 were asked how frequently they have contact with their child or children. Over ninety percent of respondents (93.0%) contact their child daily, while two

respondents (3.5%) contact their child weekly. Two respondents (3.5%) were unsure.



One-third of respondents (34.5%) attend religious services once a week, not including weddings, baptisms, or funerals. Twenty-eight percent (28.0%) of respondents attend religious services several times a year, while nine respondents (2.2%) were unsure.

Attendance at Religious Services	% Respondents
More than once a week	3.5%
Once a week	34.5%
Monthly	8.5%
Several times a year	28.0%
Never	23.3%
Unsure/NA	2.2%

Respondent Profile - cont.

Chart 10
Attendance at Religious Services

Respondents were asked, "Are you currently single, married, divorced, or widowed?" Of the 400 respondents, 190 were married (47.5%), 108 were single (27.0%), 65 were divorced (16.3%), and 36 were widowed (9.0%). One respondent (0.2%) refused to answer this question.

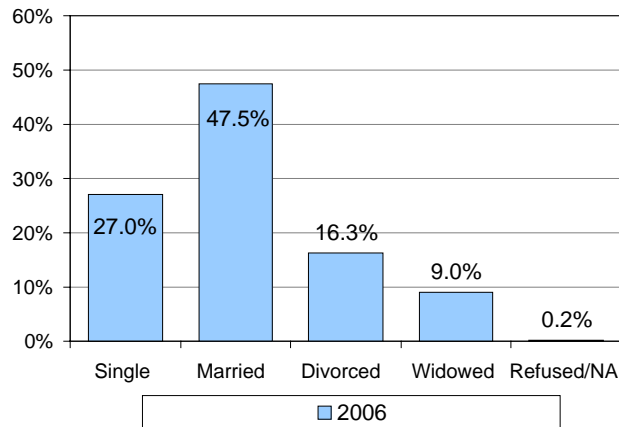


Chart 11
Marital Status



Overall Opinion

All 400 respondents who answered the 2006 Marriage Survey were asked a series of questions regarding their opinions on marriage.

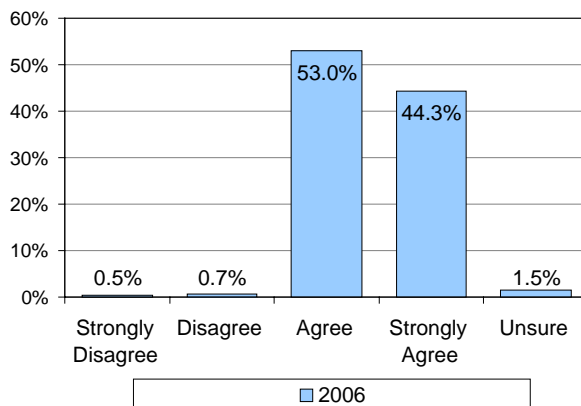
For the following questions, respondents were asked to rate the statements on a scale of 1 to 4, where 1 means “strongly disagree” and 4 means “strongly agree,” and a composite score was calculated for each statement. If every respondent answered “strongly disagree,” the composite score would be 1.00, while if every respondent answered “strongly agree,” the composite score would be 4.00.

Chart 12 Statement Averages

	Average
The family is the main building block of a healthy community	3.43
People who have children together ought to be married	3.11
Children are impacted financially in a negative way by divorce	3.04
It is important for couples to prepare for marriage	2.92
The Jackson area is a good place to be married	2.82
A household with a married couple is more financially stable	2.82
When a married couple realizes they don't love each other, they should get a divorce	2.71
Divorce is a good way for people to start over	2.67
People who live together before marriage improve their chances for a good marriage	2.51

The family is the main building block of a healthy community (3.43 average – 6 respondents unsure)

Chart 13 Family as Main Building Block



Over half of the respondents (53.0%) agreed that family is the main building block to a healthy community, while 44.3% of respondents “strongly agree.” Six respondents (1.5%) were unsure.

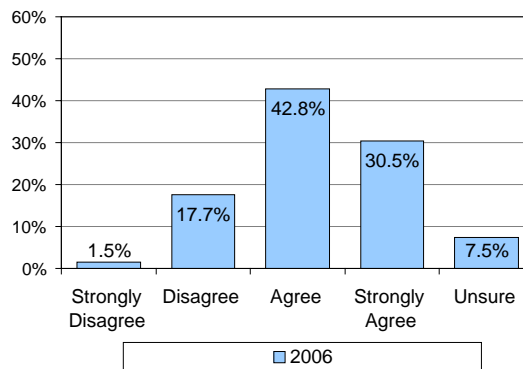
Demographic categories with significantly lower averages include: single respondents (3.27), widowed respondents (3.25), respondents age 18-34 (3.33), respondents with a household income of \$15,000-\$24,999 (3.28), and males (3.35).

Demographic categories with significantly higher averages include: married respondents (3.56), respondents with children under the age of 18 currently living in their household (3.56), respondents residing in ZIP code 49201 (3.60), and females (3.51).



People who have children together ought to be married (3.11 average – 30 respondents unsure)

Respondents were asked whether they agreed with the statement, “People who have children together ought to be married.” Over forty percent of respondents (42.8%) agreed with the statement, while 30.5% of respondents “strongly agree.” Thirty respondents (7.5%) were unsure.

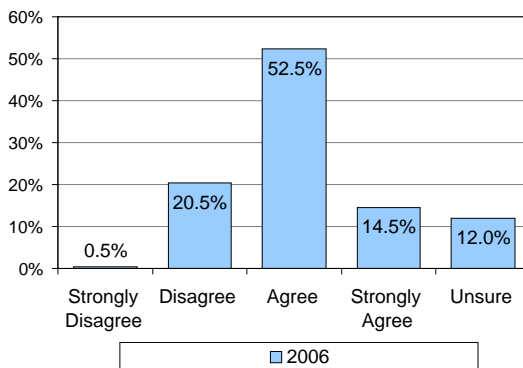


Demographic categories with significantly lower averages include: single respondents (2.82), African American/Black respondents (2.69), and respondents with a household income of \$25,000-\$34,999 (2.78).

Demographic categories with significantly higher averages include: married respondents (3.28), respondents age 45-64 (3.26), and respondents with a household income of \$100,000 and over (3.52).

It is important for couples to prepare for marriage (2.92 average – 48 respondents unsure)

Over half of the respondents (52.5%) agreed that it is important for couples to prepare for marriage through educational classes, workshops, or counseling. Twenty percent of respondents (20.5%) disagreed with the statement, while 48 respondents (12.0%) were unsure.



Demographic categories with significantly lower averages include: single respondents (2.70), respondents age 18-34 (2.73), African American/Black respondents (2.63), and respondents with a household income of \$35,000-\$49,999 (2.78).

Demographic categories with significantly higher averages include: married respondents (3.07), respondents residing in ZIP code 49230 (3.14), respondents residing in ZIP code 49269 (3.25), respondents age 65 and over (3.08), and respondents with a household income of \$100,000 and over (3.24).

Overall Opinion - con't.

Chart 14 People with Children Ought to be Married

Chart 15 Important to Prepare for Marriage

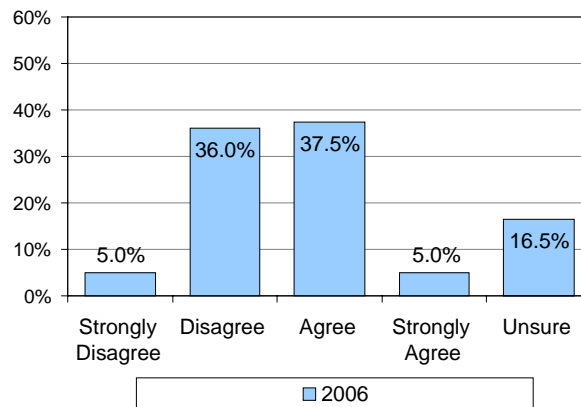


Overall Opinion
- con't.

Chart 16

Living Together Before Marriage Improves Chances

People who live together before marriage are likely to improve their chances for a good marriage (2.51 average – 66 respondents unsure)



When asked if living together before marriage improved chances for a good marriage, nearly equal numbers of respondents agreed with the statement (37.5%) as disagreed with the statement (36.0%). Sixty-six respondents (16.5%) were unsure.

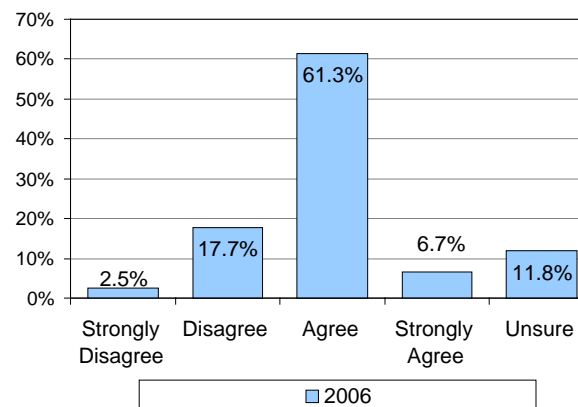
Demographic categories with significantly lower averages include: respondents age 45-64 (2.35), respondents age 65 and over (2.20), and respondents with a household income of \$15,000-\$24,999 (2.30).

Demographic categories with significantly higher averages include: single respondents (2.69), respondents with children under the age of 18 currently living in their household (2.68), respondents age 18-34 (2.76), respondents age 35-44 (2.66), African American/Black respondents (2.80), and males (2.61).

The Jackson area is a good place to be married (2.82 average – 47 respondents unsure)

Chart 17

Jackson Area Good Place to be Married



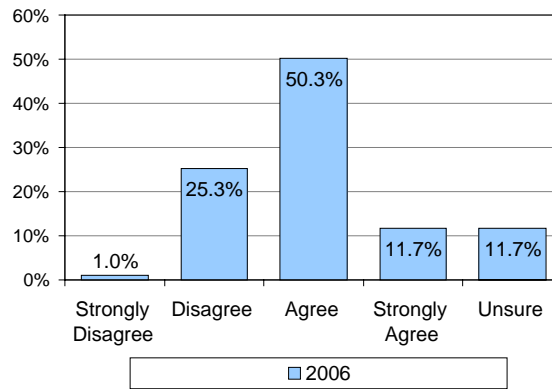
Nearly two-thirds of respondents (61.3%) agreed that the Jackson area is a good place to be married, while 17.7% of respondents disagreed. Forty-seven respondents (11.8%) were unsure.

There are no significant differences based on demographic categories.



A household with a married couple is more financially stable than a household where a couple is not married (2.82 average – 47 respondents unsure)

When asked if they agreed that a household with a married couple is more financially stable than one with a couple who is not married, half of the respondents (50.3%) answered “agree,” while one-quarter of respondents (25.3%) “disagree.” Just under twelve percent of respondents (11.7%) were unsure.

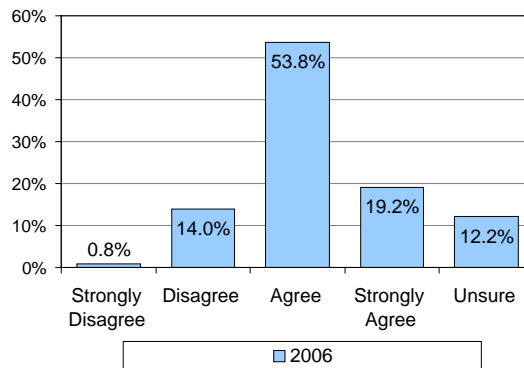


Demographic categories with significantly lower averages include: single respondents (2.68), respondents with a household income less than \$15,000 (2.47), and respondents with a household income of \$35,000-\$49,999 (2.58).

Demographic categories with significantly higher averages include: widowed respondents (3.06), respondents age 65 and over (3.02), and Hispanic respondents (3.29).

Children are impacted financially in a negative way by divorce (3.04 average – 49 respondents unsure)

Respondents were asked if they agreed that children were impacted financially in a negative way by divorce. Over half of the respondents (53.8%) answered “agree,” while under twenty percent (19.2%) “strongly agree.” Forty-nine respondents (12.2%) were unsure.



Demographic categories with significantly lower averages include: single respondents (2.90), divorced respondents (2.86), and African American/Black respondents (2.86).

The only demographic category with a significantly higher average is: married respondents (3.21).

Overall Opinion - con't.

Chart 18
Married Couples More Financially Stable

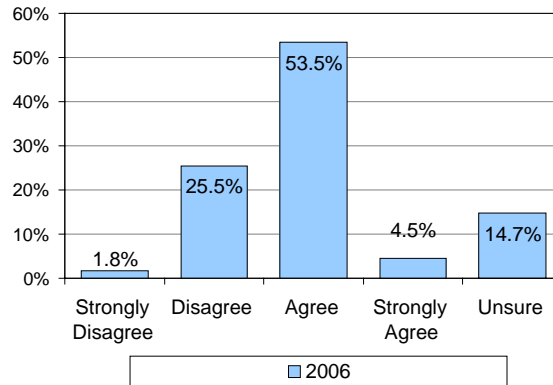
Chart 19
Children Impacted Financially



Overall Opinion
- cont.

Chart 20
Should Get Divorced

When married people realize they no longer love each other, they should get a divorce even if they have children (2.71 average – 59 respondents unsure)



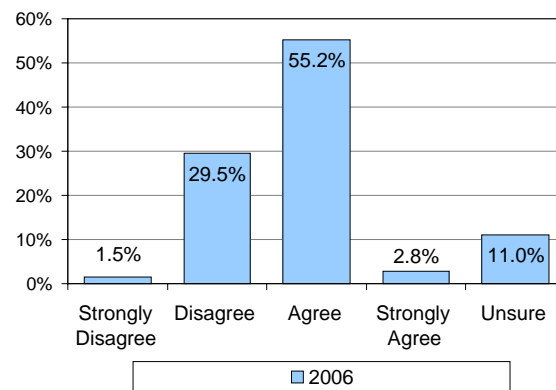
Over half of all respondents (53.5%) agreed that married people should get a divorce if they no longer love each other, even if they have children. One-quarter of respondents (25.5%) disagreed with the statement, and 14.7% were unsure.

Demographic categories with significantly lower averages include: respondents age 45-64 (2.58), and respondents age 65 and over (2.51).

Demographic categories with significantly higher averages include: single respondents (2.84), respondents age 18-34 (2.88), African American/Black respondents (2.89), and respondents with a household income of \$25,000-\$34,999 (2.88).

Divorce is a good way for people to start over (2.67 average – 44 respondents unsure)

Chart 21
Divorce is a Good Way to Start Over



Over fifty-five percent of respondents (55.2%) agreed that divorce was a good way to start over, while just under thirty percent (29.5%) disagreed. Eleven percent of respondents (11.0%) were unsure.

Demographic categories with significantly lower averages include: widowed respondents (2.45) and respondents age 45-64 (2.54).

Demographic categories with significantly higher averages include: single respondents (2.77) and respondents age 35-44 (2.80).



Respondents were asked, “What three words come to mind when you think of a healthy marriage?” The top three words named by respondents were “love” (63.5%), “trust” (39.5%), and “commitment” (16.0%). Twenty-nine respondents (7.3%) were unsure of any words, while seven respondents (1.8%) did not name any words. Over half of the respondents (51.5%) named words not listed in the chart, and their responses are listed below:

16 Respondents
Friendship

11 Respondents
Family

10 Respondents
Caring

9 Respondents
Compromise
Faith

8 Respondents
God

7 Respondents
Companionship
Compassion
Open
Sharing

6 Respondents
Forgiveness
Money
Sex

5 Respondents
Compatibility
Fidelity
Honor
Hope
Togetherness

4 Respondents
Acceptance
Affection
Equality
Faithful
Getting along
Giving
Security
Stability

	%
	Respondents
Love	63.5%
Trust	39.5%
Commitment	16.0%
Communication	15.0%
Honesty	15.0%
Respect	14.5%
Happiness	7.0%
Loyalty	7.0%
Understanding	6.3%
Other	51.5%
None	1.8%
Unsure/NA	7.3%

Overall Opinion

- con't.

Chart 22

Words for Healthy Marriage



Overall Opinion

- con't.

3 Respondents

Church
Financial stability
Patience
Support
Tolerance
Working together

2 Respondents

Agree
Appreciation
Cherish
Control
Dedication
Devotion
Fun
Healthy
Home
Intimacy
Kids
Nurturing
Partnership
Passion
Peace
Responsibility
Romance
Time

1 Respondent

Accountability
Agree to Disagree
Attention
Better life for kids
Both partners work
Both parts equal
Children
Common interests
Concern
Connections
Cooperation
Coping
Death do us part
Effort
Ever lasting love
Fairness
Forever
Fulfillment
Generosity
Good relationship
Gratitude
Hard work
Harmony
Humor
I love you
Ignoring



1 Respondent Con't

Integrity
Kind
Life
Listening
Living in Hawaii
Love one another
Love your wife
Lust
Marriage
Mutual interests
My parents
Need
Nice
No diseases
No fear
Older
People in the home
Physical relationship
Play
Religion
Religious Bonding
Remaining faithful
Remembering your vows
Sacrifice
Solidarity
Spend time together
Spontaneity
Strong foundation
Thank the Lord
The one
Thoughtful
Truth
Unity
Unselfishness
Work

Overall Opinion

- cont.



Overall Opinion - con't.

Respondents were then asked to name three words that describe an unhealthy marriage. The top three words named by respondents were "infidelity" (22.3%), "dishonest" (20.5%), and "distrust" (19.0%). Sixty-five respondents (16.3%) were unsure of any words, while nine respondents answered "none." Forty-seven percent (47.0%) of respondents named words not listed in the chart, and their responses are listed below:

Chart 23
Words for Unhealthy Marriage

	%	
	Respondents	
Infidelity	22.3%	16 Respondents <i>Lack of commitment</i>
Dishonest	20.5%	14 Respondents <i>Financial issues</i>
Distrust	19.0%	13 Respondents <i>Selfish</i>
Anger	11.5%	10 Respondents <i>Divorce</i>
Disrespect	10.8%	8 Respondents <i>Stress</i>
Disagreement	9.3%	7 Respondents <i>Drugs</i> <i>Hurt</i>
No communication	9.0%	5 Respondents <i>Depression</i> <i>Mean</i>
Abuse	9.0%	4 Respondents <i>Disappointment</i> <i>Failure</i> <i>Fear</i> <i>Misery</i>
No love	8.0%	
Hate	5.8%	
Unhappy	0.1%	
Other	47.0%	
None	2.3%	
Unsure/NA	16.3%	

3 Respondents

Bad sex
Betrayal
Deception
Drinking
Frustration
Misunderstanding
Poverty
Problems
Resentment

2 Respondents

Bad
Broken
Cruelty
Despair
Disaster
Dysfunction
Evil
Heartbroken



2 Respondents Con't

Immature
Jealousy
Kids
Lack of integrity
Pain
Separate ways
Separation
Tension
Time
Unemployment
Unstable
Violence
Work

1 Respondent

Accusations
Addiction
Anxiety
Bad communication
Bad luck
Batter
Bitterness
Blaming
Both are at fault
Broke
Cold
Cold hearted bitches
Confusion
Counseling
Crazy
Death do us part
Denial
Destructive
Difference
Difficulties
Discord
Disdain
Diseases
Disharmony
Dissatisfaction
Distance
Domination
Don't get along
Emotionally unhealthy
Empty
Faithless
God help them
Gods will
Greed
Hard times
Help
Homeless
Hopeless
Incompatibility
Inconsiderate
Insecurity

Overall Opinion

- cont.



Overall Opinion

- con't.

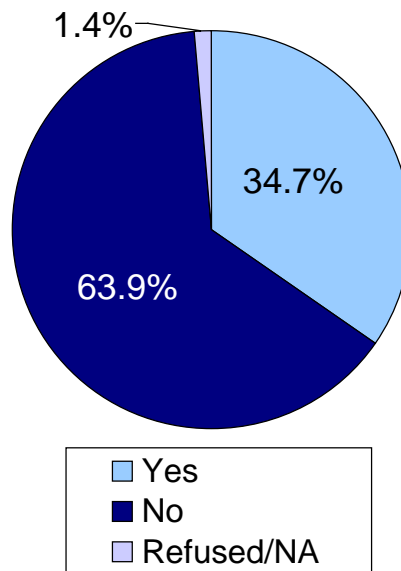
1 Respondent Con't

Interest
Irresponsibility
Lack of compromise
Lack of excitement
Lack of interest
Lack of many differences
Lack of morals
Lack of time
Lack of togetherness
Loss of Christ
Lost
Lost sense of direction
Mood swings
New
No faith
No one to care
No patience
No support
No time for one another
Not equal
Not good for kids
Not too good
One parent family
Outgrown
People who are thoughtless
Pregnancy
Reliability
Ricky Hollanders House
Routine
Secrets
Start over
Stepping out
Strain
Stubbornness
Suspicion
Time to get out
Too young
Tragedy
Trouble
Turmoil
Ulcers
Uncertainty
Uncompromising
Understanding
Unequal
Unforgiving
Unhealthy
Unorganized
Unprepared
Waste of time



The 144 single or widowed respondents were asked a series of questions regarding relationships and marriage.

Nearly two-thirds of respondents (63.9%) are not currently living with someone with whom they are having a romantic relationship, while one-third of respondents (34.7%) are currently living with someone. Two respondents (1.4%) refused to answer the question.



Questions for Single or Widowed Respondents

Chart 24
Living Situation

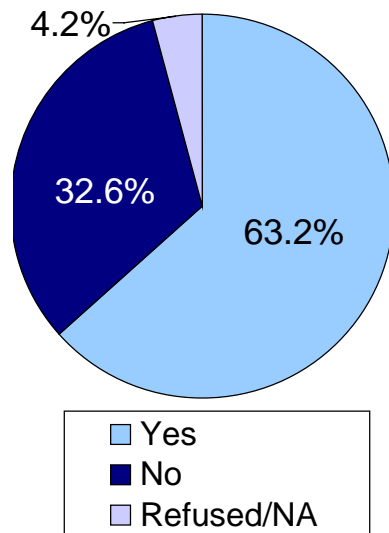
Demographic categories with significantly lower percentages of respondents who are not currently living with someone with whom they are having a romantic relationship include: single respondents (52.8%), respondents age 18-34 (51.3%), and respondents with a household income of \$35,000-\$49,999 (29.6%).

Demographic categories with significantly higher percentages of respondents who are not currently living with someone with whom they are having a romantic relationship include: widowed respondents (97.2%), respondents age 65 and over (100.0%), and respondents with a household income of \$15,000-\$24,999 (80.8%).



**Questions
for Single
or Widowed
Respondents -
con't.**

Chart 25
**Plans for
Marriage**



When asked, "Do you plan to get married in the future?" two-thirds of respondents (63.2%) answered "yes," while 32.6% of respondents answered "no." Six respondents (4.2%) refused to answer the question.

Demographic categories with significantly lower percentages of respondents who do plan to get married in the future include: widowed respondents (16.7%), respondents age 65 and over (3.8%), and respondents with a household income of \$15,000-\$24,999 (34.6%).

Demographic categories with significantly higher percentages of respondents who do plan to get married in the future include: single respondents (78.7%), respondents age 18-34 (90.0%), and respondents with a household income of \$35,000-\$49,999 (77.8%).



The 190 respondents who are currently married were asked the following questions regarding their marriage.

With the understanding that all marriages have challenges, respondents were asked to rate their marriage on a scale of 1 to 5, with “5” meaning “healthy” and “1” meaning “not very healthy” and a composite score was calculated for each statement. If every respondent answered “not very healthy,” the composite score would be 1.00, while if every respondent answered “healthy,” the composite score would be 5.00.

On a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 meaning not very healthy and 5 meaning healthy, how would you classify your marriage overall (4.54 average)

Nearly sixty-five percent of respondents (64.3%) would classify their marriage as “5/healthy,” while 28.4% classified their marriage as a 4 on a scale of 1 to 5. Only four respondents classified their marriage as a 1 or 2. One respondent (0.5%) refused to answer.

Healthiness of Marriage	% Respondents
Not very healthy	1.6%
Two	0.5%
Three	4.7%
Four	28.4%
Healthy	64.3%
Refused/NA	0.5%

Demographic categories with significantly higher averages include: respondents residing in ZIP code 49240 (4.83), respondents age 65 and over (4.78), and respondents with a household income of \$15,000-\$24,999 (4.77).

Questions for Married Respondents

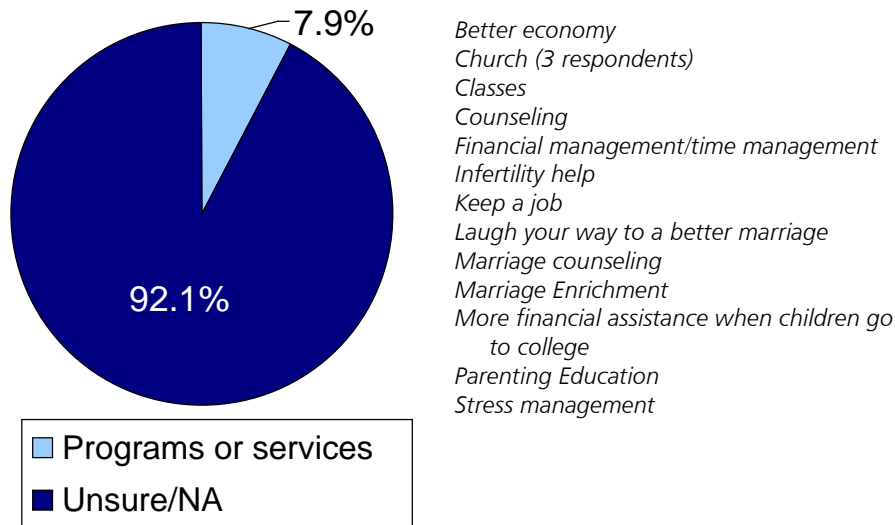
Chart 26
Healthiness of Marriage



Questions for Married Respondents - con't.

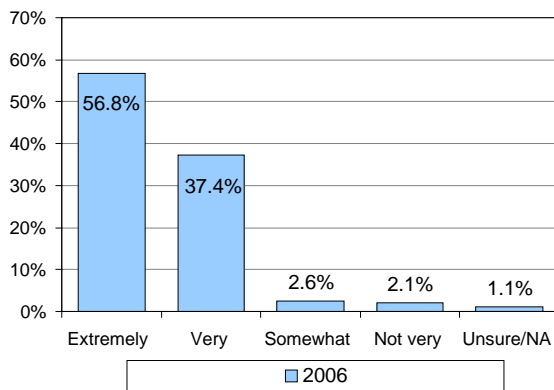
Chart 27
Programs or Services

When asked, "Are there any programs or services that would be helpful to you in maintaining and keeping a healthy marriage?" over ninety percent of respondents (92.1%) were unsure, while fifteen respondents (7.9%) named programs or services, and their responses are listed below:



Suppose that someone you knew very well and whose opinion you respected was asked how important your marriage was to you. Would that person say your marriage is (1.49 average)

Chart 28
Importance of Marriage



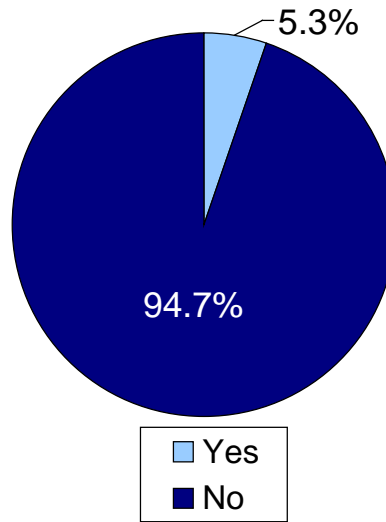
Married respondents were asked how someone they knew very well and whose opinion they respected would rate the importance of their marriage. Over half of respondents (56.8%) answered "extremely important," while 37.4% chose "very important." Two respondents (1.1%) were unsure.

The only demographic with a significantly lower average is: respondents age 18-34 (1.29).



Only five percent (5.3%) of married respondents have sought counseling or attended a workshop to strengthen their relationship in the past year.

There are no significant differences based on demographic categories.



Questions for Married Respondents - con't.

Chart 29
Sought Counseling in Past Year

The 10 respondents who sought counseling in the past year were asked how satisfied they were with the assistance they received. Eight respondents (80.0%) were satisfied, while one respondent each (10.0%) answered "no" and "unsure."

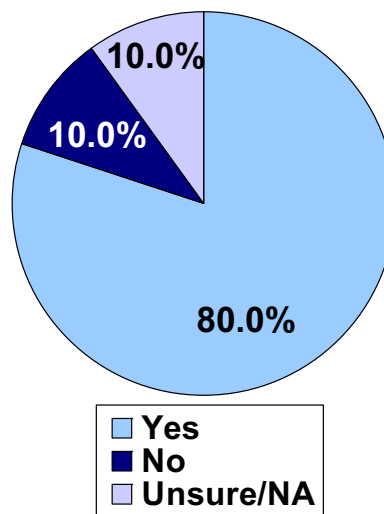


Chart 30
Satisfied with Assistance

Over one-third of respondents (37.4%) got married between the ages of 18 and 22, while 32.6% got married when they were ages 23-25. Twelve respondents (6.3%) did not answer this question.

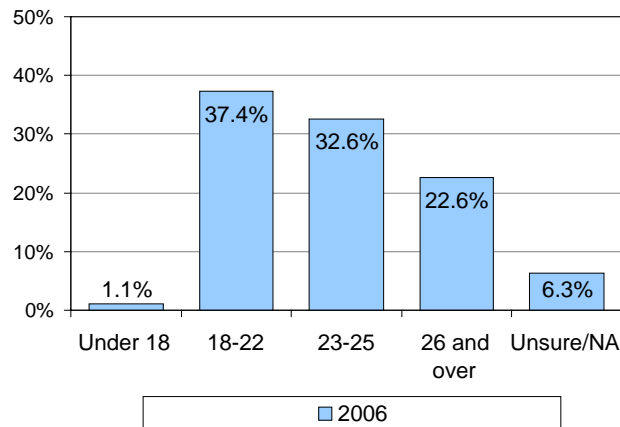
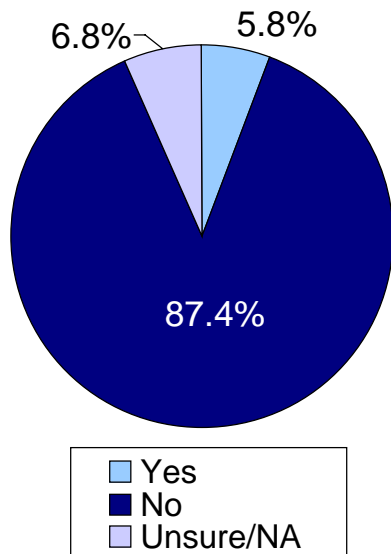


Chart 31
Age at Marriage



**Questions
for Married
Respondents -
con't.**

Chart 32
**Pregnancy a
Factor**

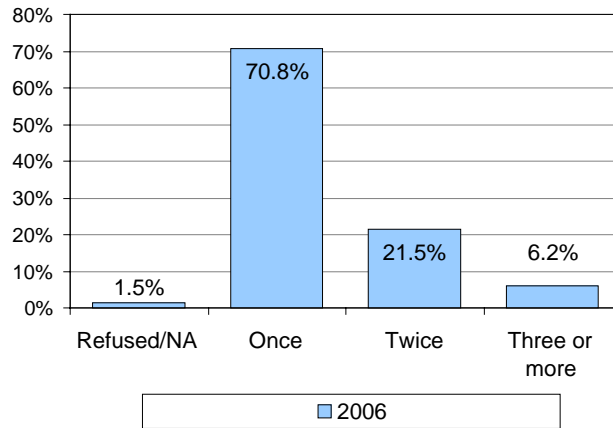


The 190 respondents currently married were asked if a pregnancy was a factor in their decision to get married. Nearly ninety percent of respondents (87.4%) said pregnancy was not a factor in their marriage, while eleven respondents (5.8%) said pregnancy was a factor. Thirteen respondents (6.8%) did not answer.



Of the 400 respondents who completed the 2006 Marriage Survey, 65 were divorced. Only these respondents were asked the following questions.

Seventy percent of divorced respondents (70.8%) were married once, while 21.5% of respondents have been married twice.



Questions for Divorced Respondents

Chart 33
Number of Marriages

The only demographic category with a significantly lower percentage of respondents who have been married once is: respondents with children under the age of 18 currently living in their household (57.7%).

Over sixty percent (61.5%) of divorced respondents are not currently living with someone with whom they are having a romantic relationship, while 38.5% of respondents are currently living with someone.

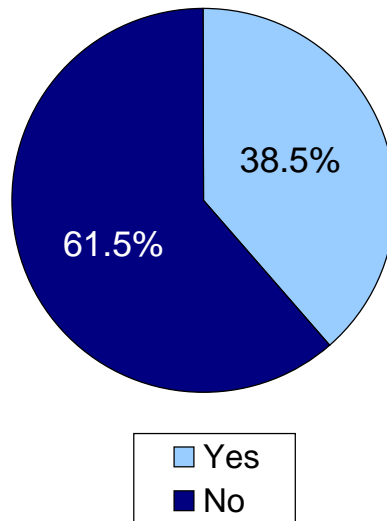


Chart 34
Living Situation

Demographic categories with significantly lower percentages of respondents who are not living with someone with whom they are having a romantic relationship include: respondents age 35-44 (50.0%) and males (50.0%).



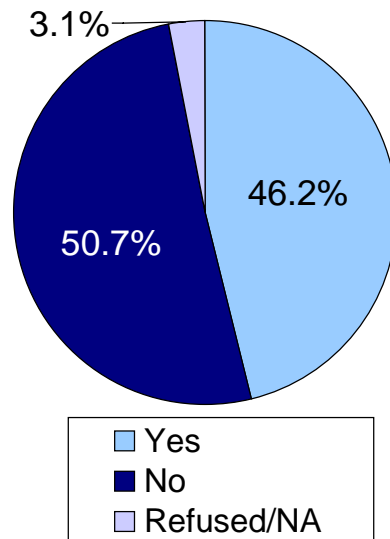
Questions for Divorced Respondents - con't.

Respondents were asked a series of questions about the circumstances contributing to their divorce. Given a list of statements, respondents were asked to answer “yes” or “no” to whether the statement contributed to their divorce. Two respondents (3.1%) refused to answer these questions. “Lack of commitment by one or both persons to make it work” contributed to respondents' divorces most often, while “religious differences” was named by no respondents.

Chart 35
Circumstances Leading to Divorce

	% Respondents
Lack of commitment by one or both persons to make it work	46.2%
Too much conflict and arguing	38.5%
Infidelity or extra-marital affairs	36.9%
Getting married too young	24.6%
Financial problems or economic hardship	21.5%
Domestic violence	15.4%
Little or no helpful pre-marital preparation	9.2%
Lack of support from family members	6.2%
Religious differences	0.0%

Chart 36
Lack of Commitment



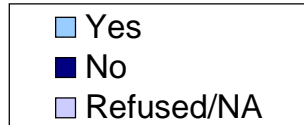
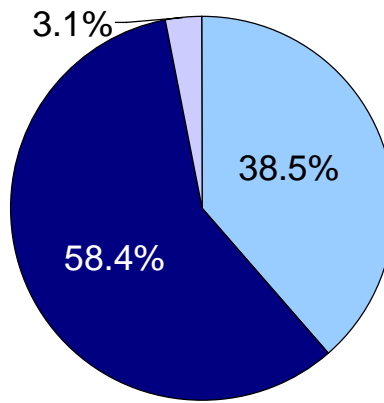
When asked whether a lack of commitment by one or both persons contributed to their divorce, half of respondents (50.7%) said “no,” while just under half of respondents (46.2%) answered “yes.”

Demographic categories with significantly lower percentages of respondents who answered “no” to lack of commitment by one or both persons to make it work includes: White/Caucasian respondents (40.8%) and males (39.3%).



Too much conflict and arguing contributed to 38.5% of respondents' divorces, while 58.4% of respondents answered that arguing did not contribute to their divorce.

There are no significant differences based on demographic categories.



Questions for Divorced Respondents - con't.

Chart 37
Conflict and Arguing

When asked whether infidelity contributed to their divorce, thirty-nine respondents (60.0%) said it did not, while one-third of respondents (36.9%) answered that it did.

There are no significant differences based on demographic categories.

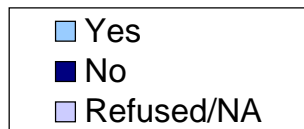
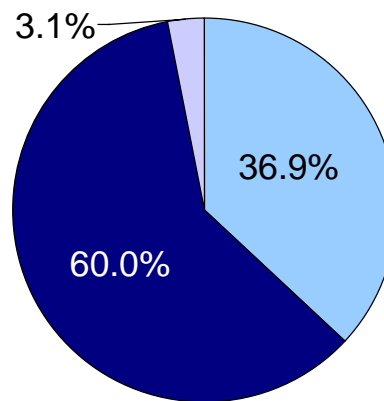


Chart 38
Infidelity

Forty-seven respondents (72.3%) said getting married too young did not contribute to their divorce, while 24.6% said it did contribute.

There are no significant differences based on demographic categories.

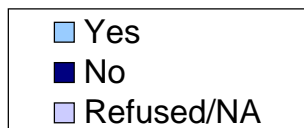
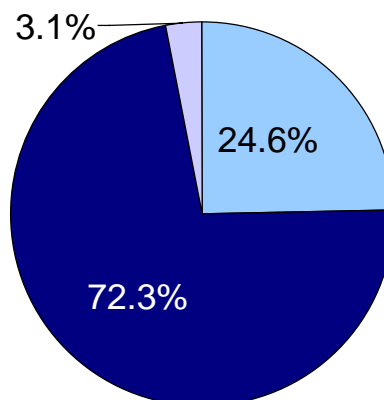
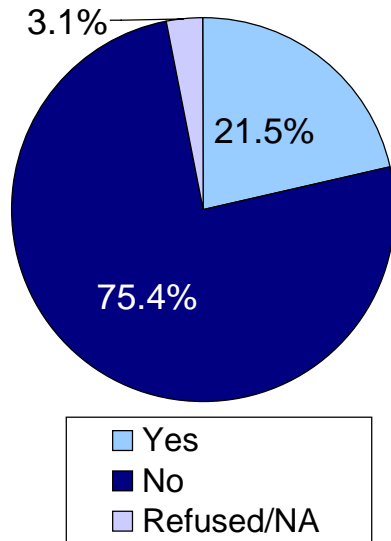


Chart 39
Getting Married Too Young



Questions for Divorced Respondents - con't.

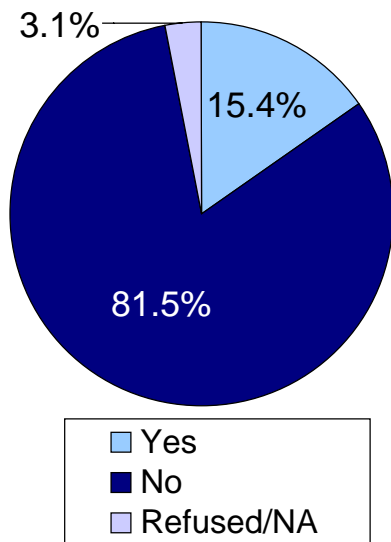
Chart 40
Financial Hardship



Three-quarters (75.4%) of respondents said financial problems did not contribute to their divorce, while 21.5% answered that it did.

There are no significant differences based on demographic categories.

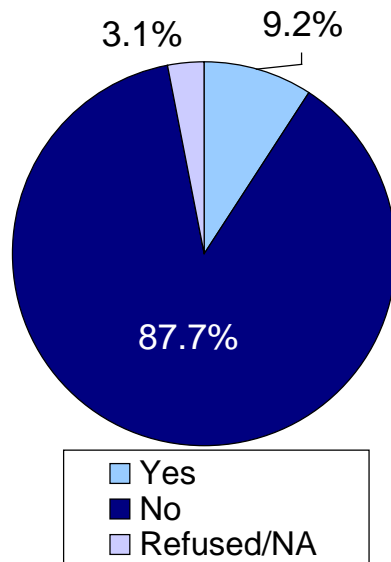
Chart 41
Domestic Violence



Four-fifths of respondents (81.5%) said domestic violence did not contribute to their divorce, while only 15.4% said that it did.

There are no significant differences based on demographic categories.

Chart 42
Little Premarital Preparation



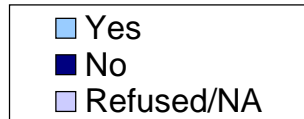
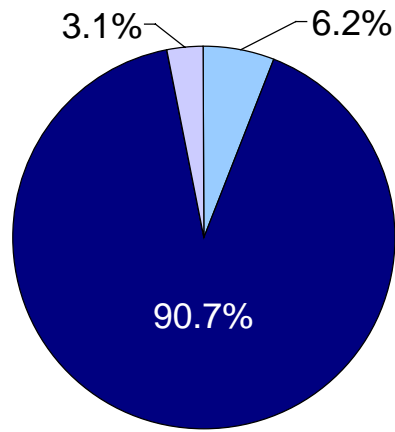
Nearly ninety percent (87.7%) of respondents said having little or no helpful pre-marital preparation did not contribute to their divorce, while only six respondents (9.2%) said it did contribute.

The only demographic category with a significantly lower percentage of respondents who answered “no” to little or no helpful pre-marital preparation contributing to their divorce is: respondents with children under the age of 18 currently living in their household (76.9%).



Only four respondents (6.2%) said that a lack of support from family members contributed to their divorce, compared with 90.7% of respondents who said it did not contribute.

There are no significant differences based on demographic categories.



Questions for Divorced Respondents - con't.

Chart 43

Lack of Familial Support

When asked if religious differences contributed to their divorce, no respondents answered "yes," while 96.9% of respondents answered "no."

There are no significant differences based on demographic categories.

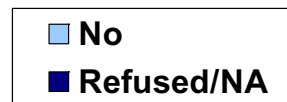
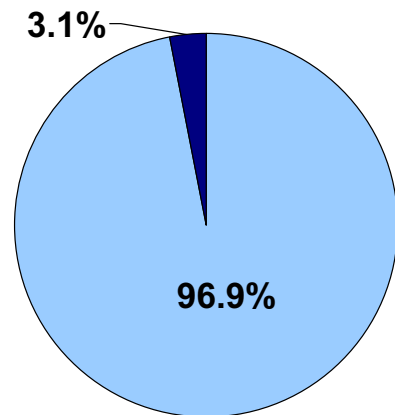


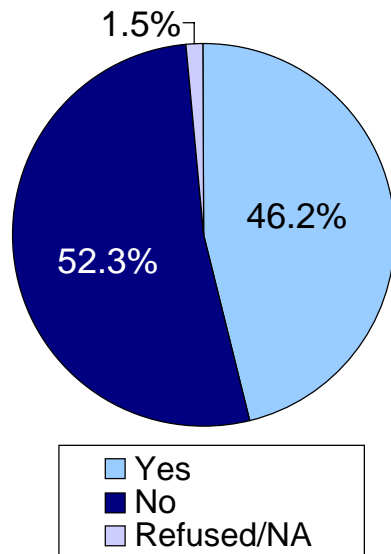
Chart 44

Religious Differences



Questions for Divorced Respondents - con't.

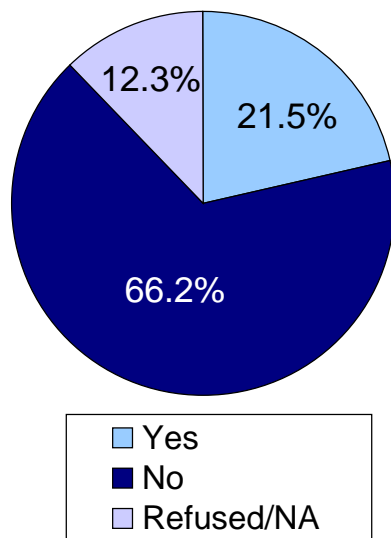
Chart 45
Sought Services



Divorced respondents were then asked if they sought services in the areas that contributed to their divorce. Just over half of respondents (52.3%) did not seek services, while 46.2% of respondents did seek services. One respondent (1.5%) refused to answer.

There are no significant differences based on demographic categories.

Chart 46
Wish They Had Worked Harder



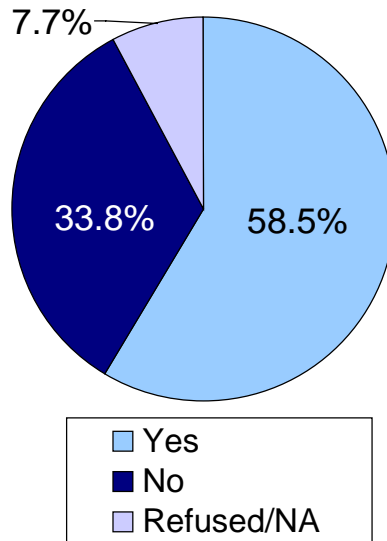
When asked, "Do you wish that you, yourself had worked harder to save your marriage?" 66.2% of respondents answered "no," while 21.5% answered "yes." Eight respondents (12.3%) were unsure.

The only demographic category with a significantly lower percentage of respondents who did not wish that they had worked harder to save their marriage is: males (46.4%).

The only demographic category with a significantly higher percentage of respondents who did not wish that they had worked harder to save their marriage is: females (81.1%).



Nearly sixty percent of respondents (58.5%) wished their spouse had worked harder to save their marriage, compared to 33.8% of respondents who did not wish their spouse had worked harder. Five respondents (7.7%) were unsure.



Questions for Divorced Respondents - con't.

Chart 47
Wish Spouse Worked Harder

The only demographic category with a significantly higher percentage of respondents who wished that their spouse had worked harder to save their marriage is: males (71.4%).

The only demographic category with a significantly lower percentage of respondents who wished their spouse had worked harder to save their marriage is: females (48.6%).

Respondents were asked if there were any programs or services that would have helped them remain married if offered in Jackson County. Seventy-five percent (75.4%) of respondents said there were no services, and fourteen respondents (21.5%) were unsure. The two respondents who said there were programs that could have helped their marriage were asked what they were, and both said "counseling."

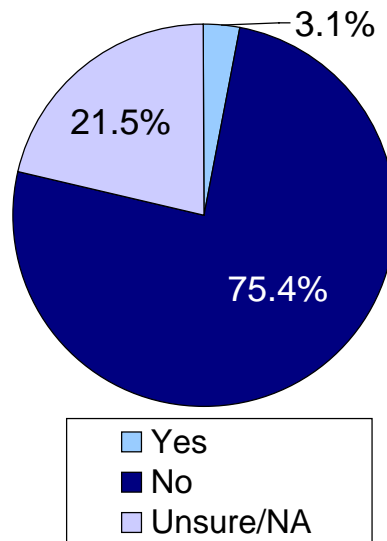


Chart 48
Programs Offered

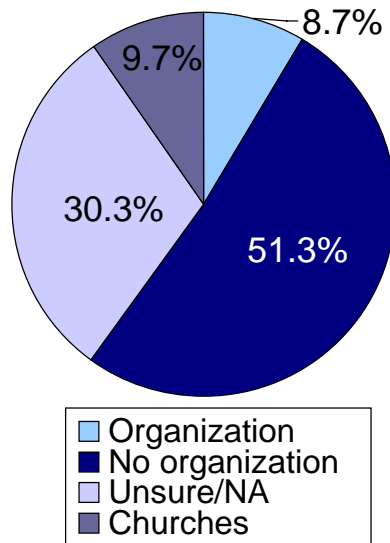
The only demographic category with a significantly higher percentage of respondents who answered "no" to the question, "Are there any programs or services that if offered in Jackson County, would have helped you remain married?" is: males (85.7%).



Awareness

All 400 respondents who completed the Jackson County Marriage Survey were asked a series of questions regarding their awareness of marital assistance and the Healthy Marriage Initiative.

Chart 49
Local Organizations That Provide Assistance



Respondents were asked, "What local organizations in Jackson County come to mind that provide marriage or relationship assistance?" Half of the respondents (51.3%) answered "none," while thirty percent (30.0%) said, "unsure." Ten percent of respondents (9.7%) answered, "churches."

The only demographic category with a significantly higher percentage of respondents who did not name any local organizations is: divorced respondents (64.6%).

Thirty-five respondents (8.7%) named other organizations, and their responses are listed below:

13 Respondents

Lifeway

4 Respondents

Family Services

3 Respondents

Counseling

United Way

2 Respondents

Catholic Social Services

1 Respondent

AWARE Shelter

Catholic Services/classes

Children's Aid

Christian Counseling

Dove Foundation

Family and Children Services

Health Department

Helpnet

Marriage Counseling

Parent and Family Center

Passageway

Salvation Army

Spring Arbor University

When asked where they would send someone they knew looking for help with marital issues, 42.0% of respondents answered "counseling," and 37.0% of respondents named "religious/clergy." Fifty-five respondents (13.8%) were unsure.

Help for Marital Issues	% Respondents
Counseling	42.0%
Religious/clergy	37.0%
Yellow pages	2.2%
Unsure/NA	13.8%
Other	5.0%

Awareness - cont.

Chart 50
Where to Turn for Help With Marital Issues

Twenty respondents (5.0%) named places not listed in the chart, and their responses are listed below:

- Catholic Social Services*
- Chelsea Medical Center*
- City Hall*
- Community Health Center*
- Dr. Hand*
- Family (2 Respondents)*
- Follow their heart*
- Friends*
- Helpnet*
- Internet*
- Lifeway (4 Respondents)*
- My mom*
- Northwest*
- Spouse*
- St. John*
- State building*
- Support Groups*

Eighty percent (80.3%) of respondents had not heard of the Healthy Marriage Initiative in Jackson County, while only 17.5% of respondents had. Nine respondents (2.2%) were unsure whether or not they had heard of the Healthy Marriage Initiative.

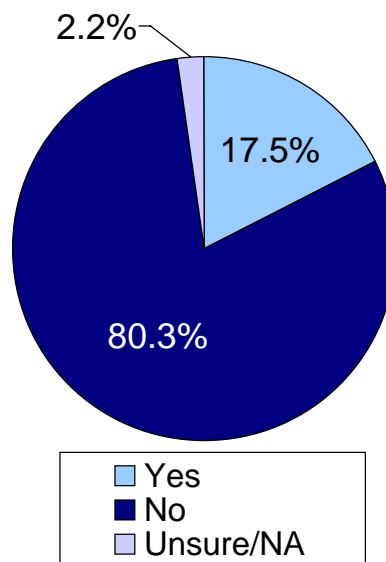


Chart 51
Healthy Marriage Initiative Awareness





Based on the research results presented in the report, the following conclusions have been developed:

Respondent Demographics – Nearly half (47.5%) of the survey respondents were married, followed by 27.0% who were single, 16.3% who were divorced, and 9.0% who were widowed. Compared to the 2000 Census, the percentage of married respondents is slightly lower than the 55.1% found on the Census. The percentage of divorced respondents is higher than the 2000 Census level of 12.6%. It is important to note that the Census measures marital status from age 15 and older, while this survey was only conducted with respondents age 18 and over.

Just under one-third (32.3%) of the survey respondents had children under 18 living in their household. In these households, 57.4% had both the biological mother and father living in the household, while the remaining households had either the biological mother (27.1%), the biological father (12.4%), or neither biological parent (2.3%).

Nearly three-quarters of the survey respondents (74.5%) attended religious services at least once in the past year. Just over one-third (38.0%) attended at least once a week, while only 23.3% did not attend at all.

Opinions About Marriage – Survey respondents were asked to rate their agreement with nine statements about marriage. The statement “The family is the main building block of a healthy community” had the strongest agreement of all nine statements, as 97.3% of survey respondents either agreed or strongly agreed with the statement. When asked whether they agreed with the statement, “People who live together before marriage are likely to improve their chances for a good marriage,” respondents were evenly split between agreement (37.5%) and disagreement (36.0%).

Single respondents agreed less often on five of the nine statements:

- Family as the main building block
- People with children ought to be married
- It is important to prepare for marriage
- Married couples are more financially stable
- Children are impacted financially in a negative way



Conclusions - con't.

Single respondents agreed more often on three of the nine statements:

- Living together before marriage improves chances for a good marriage
- When married people realize they no longer love each other, they should get a divorce even if they have children
- Divorce is a good way to start over

Married respondents agreed more often on four of the nine statements:

- Family as the main building block
- People with children ought to be married
- It is important to prepare for marriage
- Children are impacted financially in a negative way

African American/Black respondents agreed less often on three of the nine statements:

- People with children ought to be married
- It is important to prepare for marriage
- Children are impacted financially in a negative way

African American/Black respondents agreed more often on two of the nine statements:

- Living together before marriage improves chances for a good marriage
- When married people realize they no longer love each other, they should get a divorce even if they have children

These differences in responses show that not all respondents felt the same way about each statement. The most difference was noted for single respondents who agreed or disagreed with eight of the nine statements more than the overall average.

Single and Widowed Respondents – Single and widowed respondents were asked two questions about their living situation and plans for marriage. Just over one-third (34.7%) said they were currently living with someone with whom they are having a romantic relationship. Single respondents (52.8%) and younger respondents 18-34 (51.3%) had a much higher percentage currently living with someone, while widowed respondents (2.8%) and older respondents 65+ (0.0%) had a much lower percentage.

Overall, 63.2% of single and widowed respondents said “yes” they planned to get married in the future. Respondents 18-34 years old had a higher percentage (90.0%) while respondents 65+ had a lower percentage (3.8%).



Married Respondents – When asked how healthy their marriage was, 92.7% rated their marriage a “4” or “5” on a scale of 1 to 5 where 1 is not very healthy, and 5 is healthy. Only 2.1% of married respondents rated their marriage a “1” or “2.”

Only 7.9% of married respondents said there were programs or services that would be helpful to them in maintaining and keeping a healthy marriage. This compares with the question about the percentage of respondents who sought counseling in the last year at 5.3%. Interestingly, of those who named programs or services that would be helpful to them, only 30.0% had sought counseling in the past year.

Divorced Respondents – Most of the divorced respondents surveyed were married only once (70.8%) and only 38.5% are currently living with someone with whom they are having a romantic relationship. Of divorced respondents married only once, 28.3% are currently living with someone, while 71.4% of the divorced respondents married more than once are currently living with someone.

Divorced respondents were asked a series of nine questions about the circumstances contributing to their divorce. The top reasons were “lack of commitment by one or both persons to make it work,” “too much conflict and arguing,” and “infidelity or extramarital affairs.” There are no significant differences in the reasons given for divorce by the respondents’ demographic categories.

Nearly half (46.2%) of divorced respondents said they sought assistance before their divorce. Of the divorced respondents married only once, 52.2% sought assistance, while 42.9% of divorced respondents married twice sought assistance. When asked if they wished that they themselves had worked harder to save their marriage, more females (81.1%) than males (46.4%) answered “yes.” When asked if respondents wished their spouse had worked harder to save their marriage, the exact opposite was noted, as only 48.6% of females answered “yes,” compared to 71.4% of male respondents.

Just over three-quarters (75.4%) of divorced respondents said there were no services or programs that would’ve helped them remain married if offered in Jackson County. Only 3.1% said programs or counseling could have helped.



Conclusions - con't.

Awareness – All of the respondents were asked what organizations in Jackson County come to mind that provide marriage or relationship assistance, and only 18.4% could name any organization. Churches were named most often (9.7%) followed by other organizations such as Lifeway, Family Services, and United Way. When looking for help with marital issues, most respondents would turn to counseling first (42.0%), followed by clergy/religious (37.0%). Only 13.8% of respondents were unsure where they would turn for help.

Over eighty percent (80.3%) of respondents had not heard of the Healthy Marriage Initiative in Jackson County, while 17.5% said they had. Of those who had heard of the Healthy Marriage Initiative, 40.0% could not name any organizations in Jackson County that provide marriage or relationship assistance.







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Founded in 1987, Perspectives Consulting Group, Inc. provides market research and strategic planning services to businesses and organizations throughout the United States. Using state-of-the-art market research techniques including focus groups, telephone/mail surveys, interviews and customer response systems, Perspectives Consulting Group, Inc. obtains the information necessary to make efficient and effective decisions and plan for the future. Perspectives Consulting Group, Inc. offers a full-range of planning services including strategic planning and feasibility studies that are essential to succeed in today's marketplace. Our primary focus is meeting the needs of nonprofit organizations, educational institutions, governmental agencies, religious organizations, and United Ways.



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