

SINGLE PARENTING

There are many wonderful single parent homes, as well as many troubled two parent homes.

However, starting out with just one parent's love, time and earning power is a serious challenge for a child, no matter how courageous and determined his/her single parent. In addition, empirical research on family and crime suggests that crime is closely linked to family structure, which is the strongest predictor of urban violence.³

PARENTING IS NOT EASY

It is a fact that single parents heroically struggle to deal with the reality of raising children alone.

Modern parenthood is extraordinarily difficult, even with two parents, under the best of circumstances; and it is very much harder with only one parent. Evidence overwhelmingly shows that on just about every measurable criterion, children who are brought up by one parent fare relatively worse than those brought up by two parents.



PUBLIC CONSEQUENCES OF FAMILY BREAKDOWN

Society has a responsibility to assist single parents, economically, socially and emotionally in their difficult role. This requires that the government become more intrusive in people's lives, which means an increase in the size and scope of government, so that it can provide the services necessary to support the single parent family. The judiciary is also called on to determine family issues, such as custody, visitation and support payments. Further, countries with high rates of illegitimacy and divorce, such as Sweden and Denmark, spend much more money on welfare expenditures, as a percentage of the GDP, than countries with relatively low rates of illegitimacy and divorce, such as Spain and Japan.⁴

SINGLE-INCOME FAMILIES

All women work. However, many women, in addition to their family responsibilities, are employed in the paid work force. This is because two wages are often required to make ends meet, or perhaps, because women want to work. This is a woman's choice to make, dictated by her and her family's needs.

Although there are *serious financial* disadvantages to single-income families, ie. decreased disposable income, there are, nonetheless, some important emotional and *sociological* advantages for such families, and, in the long-run, for society.

That is, when one partner (either the mother or father) is the sole provider, energy can be directed by the other partner to full-time parenthood. This allows for complete attention towards the nurturing of the children and assists the family by creating values, faith and traditions, which are more readily achieved by this close family arrangement.

Healthy families ensure the future of mankind.

**STRONG FAMILIES
BUILD STRONG NATIONS.
WITHOUT STRONG FAMILIES,
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WEAKEN AND COLLAPSE.**

ENDNOTES

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is a national women's organization.
We are a non-partisan non-denominational
pro-family lobby group.

Box 8813 Station T,
Ottawa, ON K1G 3J1

Tel 613.236.4001
Fax 613.236.7203

Email realwcnca@on.aibn.com
Website www.realwomenca.com

2012

THE IMPORTANCE OF THE FAMILY



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Pamphlet produced by REAL Women of Canada



WHAT IS A FAMILY?

The family is a group of people related by blood, marriage or adoption. It is based on marriage, which unites a man and a woman in a union fully contracted and publicly expressed, with a mutual commitment to faithfulness and permanency.

A family, however, is much more than a mere legal, social or economic unit. It is a community of love and solidarity, uniquely suited to teach and transmit the cultural, ethical, social, spiritual and religious values essential for the development and well-being of its own members and society as a whole. It is also a binding, permanent commitment to past, present and future generations and, as such, it is the cement that holds society together.

A family is also the best health, educational and welfare unit ever devised by mankind. It works better than all other human arrangements.

A HAVEN IN A HEARTLESS WORLD

American sociologist, Christopher Lasch, described the family as “a haven in a heartless world” since it is the only institution ever invented to provide children with a love that is centred on them. All other institutions, including schools and day care, are intentionally designed to be impartial. But in order for children’s personalities to develop in a healthy manner, it is necessary that someone care intensely for those children, so intensely as to give them priority over all other children. It is within the family unit that this kind of intense caring usually takes place. In no way can a government supply the love, attention and self-sacrifice that most parents spontaneously offer their children.

TOTALITARIAN GOVERNMENTS DESTROY FAMILIES

The family is important because it teaches the hard truths of moral values. It forms the child’s character and gives the young the ability to grow up to become independent, stable, functioning, and compassionate individuals, and to be dependable and loyal workers or independent, forward-looking entrepreneurs. Such individuals are also much more difficult to control. As a result, such individuals and their families tend to be regarded as a threat to totalitarian governments.

Consequently, it is not surprising that every totalitarian movement has tried to destroy the family unit. Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels wanted the family destroyed, as did Adolph Hitler and Joseph Stalin. They believed the family was a dangerous threat to the power of the state and, therefore, undertook to take away the rights, responsibilities and authority of the family.

The family unit, built on the foundation of marriage between a man and a woman, is regarded as dangerous by the totalitarian state because the family, while raising its children, also passes on tradition, culture and faith – all of which confront the state when it wishes to impose its own will on the public.



BOTH FATHERS AND MOTHERS ARE IMPORTANT

Both a father and a mother have an important role to play in the emotional development of a child. The mother is usually the “heart” of the family who provides unconditional love, and thereby instills in the child a sense of belonging, and of being valued.

The father’s role is usually more demanding, as the child must earn his love and respect by fulfilling the father’s expectations. The father teaches the child to navigate amid the dangers of society by passing on values and a way of life to the child. As a result, the child becomes the person he/she was meant to be, and is enabled to successfully manage the adult world.

It is with this model of complementary roles and negotiations between the two parents, a microism of society, that children also acquire a wider understanding of community ethics.

THREATS TO MARRIAGE

Marriage is weakened and serious negative consequences to society occur as a result of policies, such as no fault divorce and the legalization of same-sex marriage. Also, the prevalence and acceptance of unmarried co-habitation and the rise of illegitimacy contribute to the undermining of marriage. It is significant that women raised in intact, married families have the lowest number of out-of-wedlock pregnancies and births.¹

It is these four factors which threaten marriage.. Because of their prevalence, marriage is losing its pre-eminent status as the social institution that directs and organizes reproduction, childbearing and adult life. Marriage has become, instead, to some, a relationship having little more significance than an opportunity to arrange an elaborate party with the bride and groom as its leading actors, with little consideration given to their responsibilities and obligations to each other and to society.

Sadly, it is the poor and minorities who pay the heaviest price when marriage breaks down because they do not have the financial means and social connections to support them when this occurs. Marriage breakdown is the greatest cause of poverty in society as the married family is far less likely to be poor than any other family structure².

