



Overcoming Barriers to Stable Marriage

Tuesday, September 13, 2005
9:00 – 11:00 a.m.

Falk Auditorium
The Brookings Institution
1775 Massachusetts Ave., NW
Washington, DC 20036

Marriage has become a hot topic on the domestic policy scene. The Bush administration is proposing to spend \$1.5 billion during the next five years on marriage programs and legislators are scrutinizing tax and transfer policies for “marriage penalties.” These initiatives are spurred by changes in marriage and childbearing during the latter part of the twentieth century and by mounting social science evidence that the decline in married-couple families is not in the best interest of children. Evidence suggests that stable marriages improve children’s emotional, intellectual, and economic well-being, and that some well-designed marriage-promotion initiatives may benefit children and families.

Panelists at this event will examine specific barriers to marriage among low-income couples and discuss strategies and programs which may strengthen marriages in this population.

This event is sponsored by the Brookings Institution and Princeton University’s Woodrow Wilson School, in conjunction with the release of the latest *Future of Children* journal volume “Marriage and Child Wellbeing.” Following each panel there will be a question and answer session.

Introduction: ISABEL SAWHILL, Vice President and Director, Economic Studies, Brookings
Overview: SARA McLANAHAN, Director, Center for Research on Child Wellbeing, Princeton University

Panel 1: Policymakers

Moderator: RON HASKINS, Senior Fellow, The Brookings Institution

Delegate ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON
(D- DC)

Senator SAM BROWNBACK
(R-Kansas)

Panel 2: Overcoming Barriers

Moderator: ELISABETH DONAHUE, Lecturer, Woodrow Wilson School, Princeton University

JULIE BAUMGARDNER
Executive Director
First Things First, Chattanooga

VIVIAN BERRYHILL
Founder and President
National Coalition of Pastors’ Spouses

KATHRYN EDIN
Associate Professor of Sociology
University of Pennsylvania

RON MINCY
Professor of Social Policy and Social Work Practice,
Columbia University

ISABEL SAWHILL
Vice President and Director, Economic Studies,
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