



## Statistics that Might Surprise You

- ▶ 74% of Americans define a family as “a group of people who love and care for each other.”
- ▶ One-third of American babies are born to unmarried parents. About 40% of these parents are living together as couples, “single parents” only in the legal sense of the word.
- ▶ Two-fifths of American children will live in a cohabiting household at some point during their childhoods.
- ▶ According to the 2000 Census, 89% of unmarried partner households are different-sex couples, and 11% are same-sex couples.
- ▶ 90% of employers that offer domestic partner benefits make both same-sex and different-sex couples eligible.



## Why Now?

According to the U.S. Census:

- ▶ 44% of American adults are not married.
- ▶ The average American spends the majority of his or her life unmarried.
- ▶ The number of unmarried partners living together in the United States grew 72% during the 1990s, to 11 million people.
- ▶ Unmarried partners are raising kids – in fact 43% of different-sex unmarried partners are living with children, as are 33% of lesbian couples and 22% of gay male couples.

The law has not caught up with these sweeping changes in American family life. In the face of continued prejudice and discrimination, many unmarried people are searching for information and community, and our families need validation, support and advocacy.

# Alternatives to Marriage PROJECT

## What Is AtMP?

The Alternatives to Marriage Project (AtMP) advocates for equality and fairness for unmarried people, including people who choose not to marry, cannot marry, or live together before marriage. We provide support and information for this fast-growing constituency, fight discrimination on the basis of marital status, and educate the public and policymakers about relevant social and economic issues. We believe that marriage is only one of many acceptable family forms, and that society should recognize and support healthy relationships in all their diversity. AtMP is a national 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization.

## Family Values — Our Style

The Alternatives to Marriage Project promotes the truth about the diverse families we live in and see all around us:

- Commitment takes many forms.
- Children’s well-being is more closely linked to parents’ financial resources and stability than to marital status.
- Marriage works well for many people, but is far from the only model for healthy, stable families.

## What the Alternatives to Marriage Project Has to Offer

*Community:* Finally — a place to connect with other unmarried people for social support, to vent, or to share stories and resources.

- Our annual fundraisers and other events in cities across the U.S. are great opportunities to great ways to meet like-minded people — and great parties!
- Our online discussion, AtMP-Talk, provides a place for singles, people in relationships, and professionals whose work addresses marital status issues to ask questions, share articles and advice, and discuss unmarried issues in our lives and around the world. To subscribe, send an email with “subscribe atmp-talk [your name]” in the body of the message to [listserv@lists.netspace.org](mailto:listserv@lists.netspace.org).

*Advocacy:* AtMP supports policies and legislation that affirm unmarried relationships, and organizes people to speak out against discrimination on the basis of marital status.

- A fast-growing media presence is our primary tool for catalyzing cultural change. Our staff, volunteers, and members make hundreds of media appearances each year, recently including *The O’Reilly Factor*, *CNN*, *The Early Show*, *The Wall Street Journal*, *The Washington Post*, *USA Today*, and *NPR’s Morning Edition*.
- AtMP has become a primary source of ideas about the evolving American family for policymakers and journalists, thanks to publications like *Let Them Eat Wedding Rings*, our policy report taking issue with marriage promotion as a solution to poverty.

*Information:* AtMP is a one-stop source of essential information about practical issues and major trends.

- Our newsletter, the *Alternatives to Marriage Update*, keeps members posted on national trends, unmarried people in the news, and laws and policies that affect our community. To sign up, contact us with your email or mailing address.
- Our web page, [www.unmarried.org](http://www.unmarried.org), is packed with resources, articles, and FAQs about every issue affecting unmarried lives, from legal protections to domestic partnership to statistics and fun facts.
- We give workshops and lectures around the country on issues that relate to unmarried relationships.

