



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
February 19, 2009

Young People Want “Happily Ever After,” But Lack Skills to Make Marriage Work

(Washington, DC) – A groundbreaking new survey sponsored by the National Healthy Marriage Resource Center (NHMRC) finds that 82% of young adults aged 18-30 plan to get married and stay married for life. However, an estimated 40% of first marriages end in divorce. Why?

“There is often a disconnect between attitudes about marriage and the reality of getting or being married,” says Mary Myrick, NHMRC Project Director. “Once married, conflicts may arise over money, parenting, and other important issues.”

To better understand current attitudes about marriage, NHMRC conducted this quantitative survey of 3,600 young adults aged 18 to 30. Overall, the survey found that young adults aspire to be married and believe that a healthy marriage is within reach. And, the #1 reason to take the plunge is “love,” (87 percent) followed closely by “lifelong commitment” (72 percent). Only 31% saw “having children” as a reason to get married. Based on the findings from this nationally-representative survey, NHMRC is launching a public education campaign on marriage and created **TwoOfUs.org**, an interactive website, that provides people with direct access to relationship resources.

“We want to get people talking about the complexity of healthy marriages and provide tools and tips for making relationships work during challenging times,” says Myrick. “We are targeting young adults because they are the group most likely to be considering marriage for the first time and are most likely to access an online resource like **TwoOfUs.org**.”

Why does this matter? Research has shown that there are measurable benefits to adults and children who experience a healthy marriage, including better health, increased wealth/financial stability, and longer life expectancy. “During these tough economic times, relationships can be severely impacted,” says Paul Amato, Professor of Sociology, Penn State University. “It is more important now than ever to provide solid information and tools to help couples. Research clearly demonstrates that healthy relationships benefit individuals, families, and the broader community.”

Established in 2006, the National Healthy Marriage Resource Center is a clearinghouse that provides high quality, balanced, and timely information and resources on healthy marriage and relationships. NHMRC is primarily funded by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services’ Administration for Children and Families. Visit www.TwoOfUs.org for more information.

NHMRC commissioned TRU, part of Research International, to conduct a quantitative segmentation study among young adults. The online questionnaires were completed, with equal numbers of respondents in three age cohorts: 18-22, 23-26, and 27-30. Each age group had a balanced number of men and women, with larger numbers of Hispanic and African Americans represented than in the general population.

For more information, contact **Ellen Holman** at **405-496-7908** and ellen.holman@publicstrategies.com