

# Premarital counseling reduces divorce risk

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A survey of adults in Arkansas, Texas, Oklahoma and Kansas found that couples who go through premarital counseling are less likely to divorce.

Scott Stanley, who runs a counseling organization, conducted the survey in 2001 and found a 31 percent lower divorce rate among couples that had counseling before marriage, USA Today reported. He also discovered that 44 percent of the couples married since 1990 had had counseling -- a far higher rate than among those who married four or five decades ago.

The Roman Catholic Church requires counseling for couples who want a religious ceremony, and many other churches recommend it.

Stanley found that the benefits of counseling cut across class, racial, ethnic, income and religious lines. But he also found wide differences in how easily couples could get counseling.

His study was published this spring in the Journal of Family Psychology.

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