



The Success Sequence Program

Inspire Hope by Teaching the Success Sequence to America's Teens

Chair Fowler Arthur, Vice Chair Odioso, Ranking Member Brennan, and members of the House Education Committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide proponent testimony on Senate Bill 156.

My name is Scott Phelps. I am the Executive Director of A&M Partnership near Chicago and author of The Success Sequence Program at SuccessSequence.com. I began this work in 1999 out of a concern for the high levels of teen pregnancies, births, and abortions that were taking our youth off course and compromising their future well-being. Now, 27 years later, these three metrics are at all-time recorded lows; however, this good news dissipates rapidly in the shadow of three mega-trends that animate our work.

1. Nonmarital births near all-time highs.
2. Marriage rates near all-time lows.
3. Fertility rates near all-time lows.

For individuals and society to flourish, nonmarital births cannot continue to increase. Marriage rates cannot continue to decrease. Fertility rates cannot continue their decline. We hear a lot today about existential threats. But an actual existential threat is when a culture stops having babies. The broader purpose of Success Sequence education is to arrest these negative trends and equip a new generation of American youth to participate in the rebuilding of a healthy culture.

Through no fault of their own, many of our youth are lost in a fog of confusion. Everywhere they turn, they are confronted by messages of despair. As a result, they tend to look toward the future with fear. Fear that they can't afford to go to college. Fear that they won't be able to get a good paying job. Fear of not being able to buy a home. Fear that they can't afford to raise children. Fear that they won't be able to have a comfortable future with financial independence. Fear that if they get married, it will end in divorce. Where do our youth find hope for their future?

Teaching the success sequence addresses and alleviates these fears. It provides youth with a practical pathway forward in life and gives them hope for a future career, for marriage, for family, for freedom.

I confess that today I come here with a bit of a heavy heart. For years, we have celebrated the findings of the University of Michigan's Monitoring the Future Survey, indicating that nearly all high school seniors, some 90% on average, have said that they want to get married and have a family. However, in their latest report, this good news has crashed into the rocks.

Figure 1

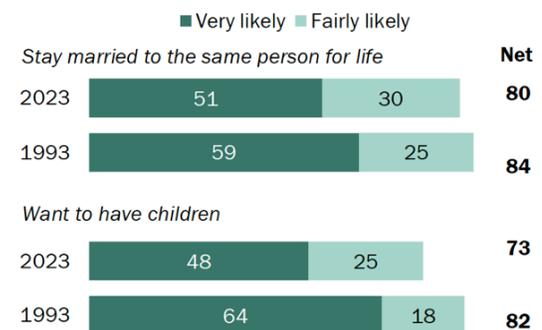
12th graders are less likely than in the past to say they want to marry someday

% of 12th graders saying they are most likely to choose to ___ in the long run



Note: Figures may not add up to 100% due to rounding. 12th graders who say they are already married (<0.5%) are excluded from this analysis.

Source: Monitoring the Future: A Continuing Study of American Youth (12th-Grade Survey), 1993 and 2023.



Note: Other response options include "Uncertain," "Fairly unlikely" and "Very unlikely." Figures may not add to subtotals due to rounding. 12th graders who say they already have children (<0.5%) are excluded from this analysis.

Source: Monitoring the Future: A Continuing Study of American Youth (12th-Grade Survey), 1993 and 2023.

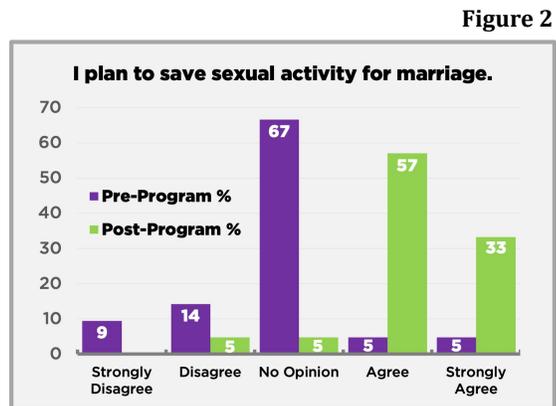
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Now, only 67% of high school seniors think they will marry, and of these, only 51% believe their marriage will last a lifetime, and only 48% want to have children. These are terribly sobering statistics, especially in light of what has been such good news for so long. The messages of despair have finally caught up with us. ¹

Enough of the doom and gloom. Our youth need hope for their future. The Success Sequence provides them with the positive, healthy guidance they need to pursue their dreams. It teaches the importance of 1) education, 2) career, and 3) preparing well for future marriage and family.

The American Enterprise Institute has issued a report showing that a large majority of Americans (77%) support teaching the Success Sequence in public schools. This is regardless of their age, political party, or ideology. They say it is “uncommonly popular.” ²

Our Success Sequence Program teaches youth the optimal pathway for future success with a clear emphasis on the objective benefits of reserving all sexual activity and childbearing for marriage. The Success Sequence Program has been widely implemented with over 2 million students across all 50 states, with very positive and sometimes dramatic results.



In the Knoxville, Tennessee area, students showed an exact 90% flip. On the pre-test question of “saving sexual activity for marriage,” 90% of students responded “no” or “I don’t know.” After The Success Sequence Program, those same students responded 90% “Yes.”

In central Texas, 97% of students said they would recommend the program to their friends. Ninety-seven percent!

The State of Ohio is to be commended for considering this positive initiative, and it joins a growing list of states considering or passing such legislation, including Texas, Alabama, Utah, Tennessee, and Indiana.

We are under no illusions that all students will follow the Success Sequence. Nor is this a one-size-fits-all guarantee for success. However, all students should have the opportunity to learn these objective benefits and determine for themselves whether it is an option they wish to pursue.

Providing Success Sequence instruction for youth is the pathway to restoring hope for America’s youth and rebuilding the foundation of American culture. Thank you.

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1. <https://www.pewresearch.org/short-reads/2025/11/14/12th-grade-girls-are-less-likely-than-boys-to-say-they-want-to-get-married-someday/#:~:text=By%20Dana%20Braga,Michigan's%20Institute%20for%20Social%20Research.>

Figure 1: Pew Research citing University of Michigan (above).

2. <https://www.aei.org/research-products/report/uncommonly-popular-public-support-for-teaching-the-success-sequence-in-school/pdf/>

Figure 2: Survey data available upon request from A&M Resources: Info@SuccessSequence.com