

Written evidence from Diane Howarth (DDS0110)

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I am a wife, mother and grandmother, who has been married for over forty five years and although I don't feel able to write some polished well educated report, I feel strongly about the impact these changes will have on our society and the damage that these changes will cause especially to our children. Firstly I want to say that I do not regard marriage through rose tinted glasses and recognize that there can be circumstances and situations where for the necessity of safety of one or more of the parties within the marriage, it may no longer be possible to stay in that marriage

However experience tells me that there can be many times within a marriage that for many many reasons one or the other party, believes / feels that the only solution is to get out or get a divorce. Here just are a few examples,

Financial hardship, caused by a)unemployment, b) a new business, that failed, c) an unplanned pregnancy etc.

Children, a) a child with severe autism, b) life limiting illness, c) drug or alcohol issues, etc.

Spouses, a) work demands b) addictions - various, c) adultery, d)debilitating illness, e) mental health issues. etc.

The list can literally be endless and can feel insurmountable when going through any of these situation. Which is why our society must get behind marriage as an institution that needs to be taken seriously. It is a commitment and huge responsibility that needs all the support society can give it, to help families weather the storms. These changes see marriage as simply a relationship that can be walked away from in as little as six months and makes the assumption everyone is going to be the better for it. and yet research shows time and time gain that children brought up by a mother and a father in a loving stable family are more secure, less likely to have addiction issues or be unemployed do better at school and go on to give their own families the same love and commitment. Our children's health, and well being is brushed aside, without any thought for their need for stability.

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