



## **If the Marriage Ain't Happy... *ain't nobody happy***

**Poster Discussion Guide**  
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**The Myth** – The marriage is not the heart of the home. What's important is to focus on the kids or the family in general. The marriage can be put on the back burner and things will be okay.

**The Facts** - Problems in the marriage affect everyone, and nearly every area of one's life. Consider this list of problems that can stem from marital problems in the family.

### **Problems for adults related to marital distress:**

- Poorer overall health, more depression and more eating disorders.
- Decreased longevity.
- Decreased work productivity.
- Increased substance abuse.
- Increased criminal activity.
- Increased rates of domestic violence.
- Increased rates of suicide.

### **Problems for children related to marital distress:**

- Increased behavioral disorders.
- Poorer academic performance.
- Lower self-esteem.
- Increased criminal activity.
- Increased rates of suicide.

### **What Works?**

**Establish your marriage as a top priority.** Dr. Bill Doherty in his book *Take Back your Marriage* suggests eight ways to do this:

1. If you are married, remind yourself that your marriage is the foundation of your family and the cornerstone of your children's security.
2. Remind yourself that your children are apt to be better fighters for their needs than you and your mate are at fighting for the needs of your marriage.
3. Limit your family's outside activities so that you have two rare elements for today's families: time to hang out as a family and time to hang out as a couple.
4. Have fixed bedtimes for your children, after which you are off duty and can be alone as a couple.
5. Don't let children interrupt every conversation you have.
6. Carve out private time for yourselves as a couple.
7. Get sitters and go out on regular dates.
8. Be open with your children about what you are doing for your marriage.

## More Resources

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