



Why 2nd Marriages Fail

Bramlett MD and Mosher WD. Cohabitation, Marriage, Divorce, and Remarriage in the United States . National Center for Health Statistics. Vital Health Stat 23(22). 2002.

Stressful events in the past may impact the stability of remarriages

Parental divorce

The probability of second marriage disruption is higher for women who did not grow up in a two-parent family (49%) than for women who did (33%).

Forced intercourse

Women who have ever been forced to have intercourse are more likely to experience second marriage disruption. The probability of second marriage disruption is about 25% higher for all women who have ever been forced to have intercourse, and even higher among white women (33%)

General anxiety disorder (GAD)

Women who have ever suffered from GAD (general anxiety disorder) are nearly 50% more likely to experience disruption of a second marriage than women who have never suffered from GAD

Children from a previous marriage and failure of the second marriage

Women who already have children at the time of remarriage are more likely to have their second marriage end in divorce than women who do not have any children at the time of remarriage.

If the children were unwanted, the probability of the second marriage ending is even higher

After 10 years of remarriage, the probability of that marriage ending is

- 32% for women with no children at remarriage
- 40% for women with children, but none of whom were reported as unwanted
- 44% for women with children, and any of whom were reported as unwanted
- (slightly higher, at 47 percent, among white women)

Geographical, Social and Economic Factors in Failed 2nd Marriages

The chance of failure of the second marriage is

- Lower in the Northeast and higher in the Midwest
- Higher in families living at lower income levels
- Higher for women without a high school education
- Higher for women with no religious affiliation
- Higher for women whose first birth was before or during the first 7 months of first marriage as opposed to after 7 months of marriage
- Higher for women who are older than their husbands

The Effect of Cohabitation Outside of Wedlock

Living together out of wedlock before the first marriage leads to a higher rate of divorce. Conversely, living together before the second marriage leads to a slightly decreased level of divorce