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MAKE DIVORCE EASIER? MAKE MARRIAGES STRONGER

***Ontario is announcing legal changes to make divorce easier.
What Ontario needs are ways to encourage strong marriages***

December 17, 2009 (Ottawa) – Today the Attorney General of Ontario announced measures to make divorce easier. What Ontario actually needs are measures to make marriages stronger.

“Research shows that strong marriages are a critical factor for the health of adults and children alike. The introduction of no-fault divorce in Canada already made divorce easier, arguably too easy. What we need are measures to help couples work through their troubles,” says Dave Quist, Executive Director of the Institute of Marriage and Family Canada.

Though some divorce is warranted, research divides marriages into high-conflict and low-conflict, the latter being the kind where counseling and assistance could bring about positive change. The bulk of divorces today are occurring in low-conflict marriages. “Certainly no one is advocating for couples to remain trapped in high-risk marriages,” says Quist. “But when a low-conflict marriage is troubled, we are better off offering solutions for that couple to stay together.”

Suggestions to strengthen marriage at the provincial level include the incorporation of the positive attributes of marriage into school curriculum, the eradication of so-called marriage penalties in taxes, and legal protection for marriage, as distinguished from living common law.

Research shows marriage offers myriad benefits to adults, children and society. The cost of marital breakdown in the province of Ontario alone comes to \$3.2 billion dollars, [research also shows](#). “Marriage is not easy, and our sympathies go out to those suffering conflict,” says Quist. “But particularly where children are involved, all efforts should go toward protecting this important institution.”

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For additional information or comment, please contact: Dave Quist, Executive Director, at 613-565-3832

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