



2015 Annual Relationship, Marriage, and Divorce Survey Findings on College-Aged and Post-College-Aged Americans*

*Note: this is a study of individuals 18-23 and 24-32, whether enrolled in college or not.

The Study

These are findings from an poll conducted May 11-15, 2015.

For the survey, a sample of 2,011 U.S. adults age 18 and over was interviewed online. The precision of Ipsos online polls is measured using a credibility interval. In this case, the poll has a credibility interval of plus or minus 2.5 percentage points for all respondents.

The data were weighted to the U.S. current population data by gender, age, region, and household income based on Census data.

Avvo conducts periodic studies of topics at the intersection of lifestyle and the law to better understand the issues facing individuals engaging with attorneys and the legal system. Given that divorce and family law are two of the largest and most routine legal actions taken in the United States, understanding the relationship dynamics that lead to marriage and divorce is beneficial to the legal consumers and attorneys Avvo serves.

Summary

College-aged Americans are less like individuals straight out of college and more like older Americans – except when it comes to open relationships

This study examined and compared three age cohorts:

- 18-23 year-olds (considered college-aged, though not all respondents in this group are enrolled in college)
- 24-32 year-olds (considered post-college-aged, though not all respondents in this group graduated from college)
- 33 year-olds and over

The expectation was that college-aged and post-college-aged Americans are very much alike when it comes to attitudes about relationships, marriage, and divorce, while individuals well into adulthood (those 33+) are different.

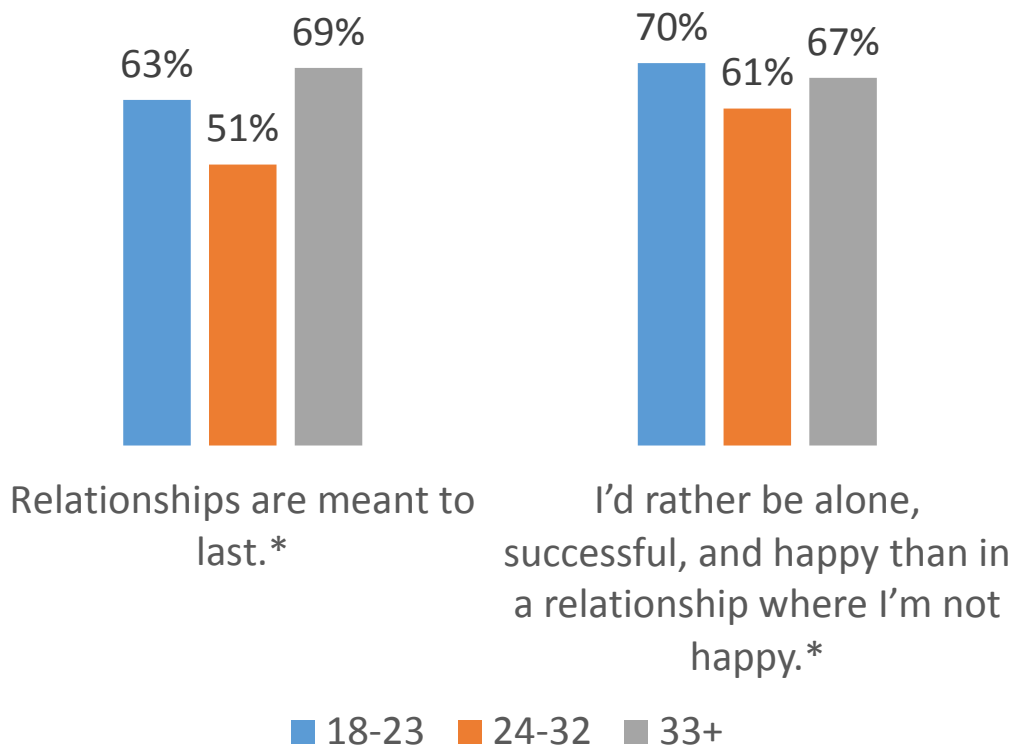
What we found was something we didn't expect: **the “odd” group wasn't the oldest cohort but rather the middle cohort** (24-32 year-olds): 18-23 year-olds are more similar to 33+ year-olds than they are to 24-32 year-olds when it comes to general attitudes about relationships, marriage and divorce (For divorce, there is an **exception**: attitudes are similar regarding divorce in the absence of a “spark.”)

However, when it comes to attitudes around open relationships, college-aged and post-college-aged Americans look similar, while the attitudes of individuals 33 and over stand apart.

Attitudes around Relationships and Marriage

Americans post-college (24-32) stand out as a bit different when it comes to attitudes about relationships: they're more jaded, but also crave relationships more

18-23 year-olds are more similar to those 33 and up than they are to people 24-32 when it comes to how they feel about relationships

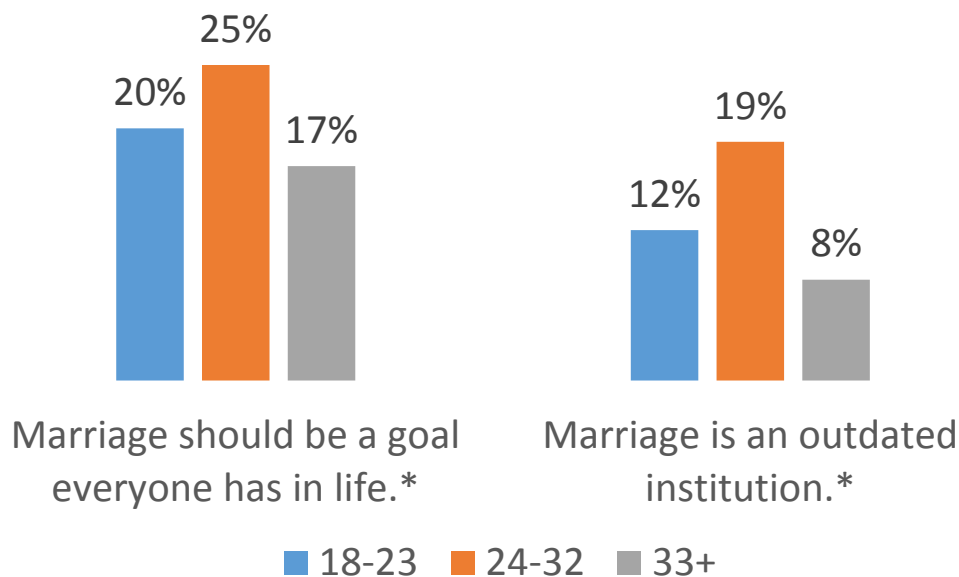


Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with each of these statements: Relationships weren't meant to last; I'd rather be alone, successful, and happy than in a relationship where I'm not happy. n for 18-23=145; n for 24-32=298, n for 33+=1568.

*Differences between 24-32 and each of the other age groups are statistically significant.

When it comes to perceptions of marriage, college-aged Americans are like those 33 and over; 24-32 year olds stand out as seeing marriage as a goal though also outdated

18-23 year-olds are more similar to those 33 and up than they are to people 24-32 when it comes to how they feel about marriage

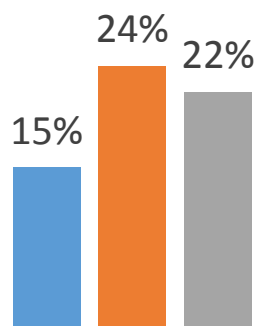


Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with each of these statements: Marriage is a goal everyone should have in life; Marriage is an outdated institution. n for 18-23=145; n for 24-32=298, n for 33+=1568.

*Differences between 24-32 and 33+ are statistically significant. Differences between 18-23 and 33+ are not statistically significant.

One exception involves marriage in the case of a child: fewer college-aged Americans believe that a child means instant marriage

18-23 year-olds stand apart when it comes to marriage in the case of pregnancy: fewer agree that if you have a child with someone, you should marry them.



If you have a child with someone, you should marry them.

■ 18-23 ■ 24-32 ■ 33+

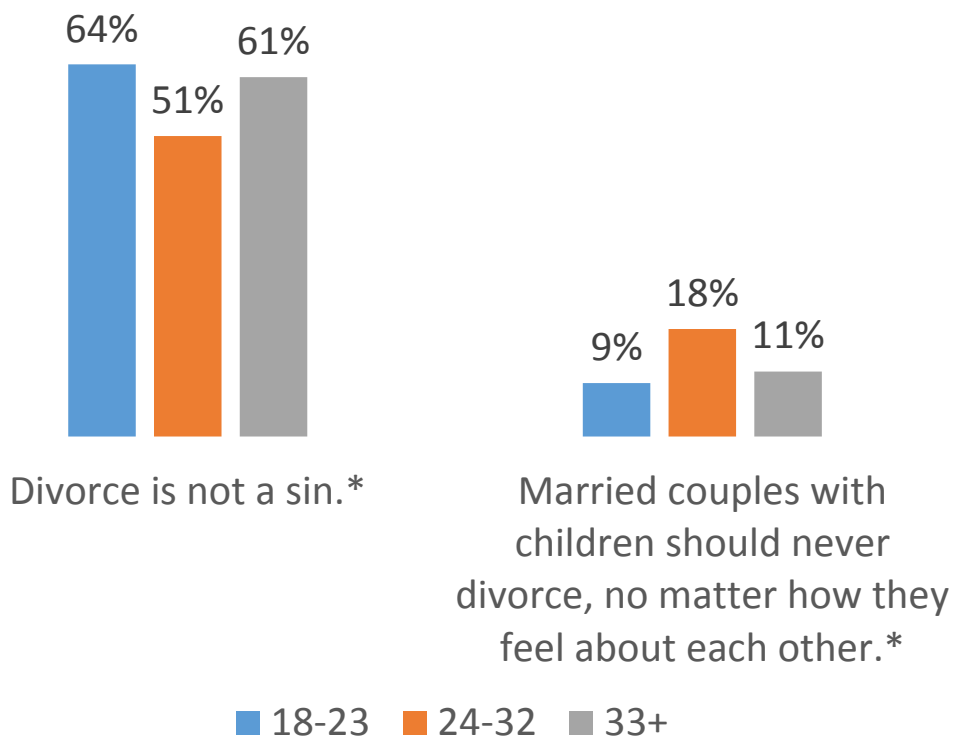
Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with each of these statements: If you have a child with someone, you should marry them. n for 18-23=145; n for 24-32=298, n for 33+=1568.

*Differences between 18-23 and each of the other cohorts are statistically significant.

Attitudes around Divorce

Post-college-aged Americans also stand out as being less open to divorce than 18-23 year olds or those who are 33+

18-23 year-olds are more similar to those 33 and up than they are to people 24-32 when it comes to attitudes around divorce.

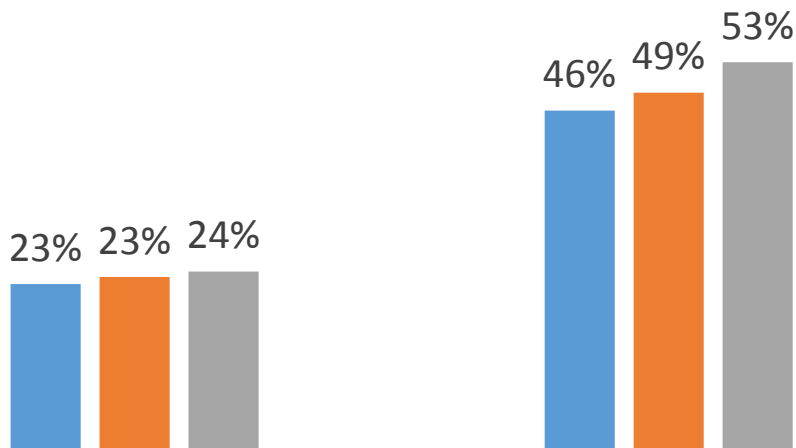


Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with each of these statements: Divorce is a sin; Married couples with children should never divorce, not matter how they feel about each other. n for 18-23=145; n for 24-32=298, n for 33+=1568.

*Differences between 24-32 and each of the other age cohorts are statistically significant.

However, all cohorts seem similar when it comes to attitudes around divorce where romance or a “spark” is an issue.

The same proportion of people in each age group believe that married couples who don’t want to be involved romantically should divorce, but that a marriage without a spark doesn’t mean divorce is the necessary option.



Married couples who no longer want to be in a romantic relationship should definitely get a formal divorce. Just because the spark is gone in a marriage doesn't mean you should get a divorce.

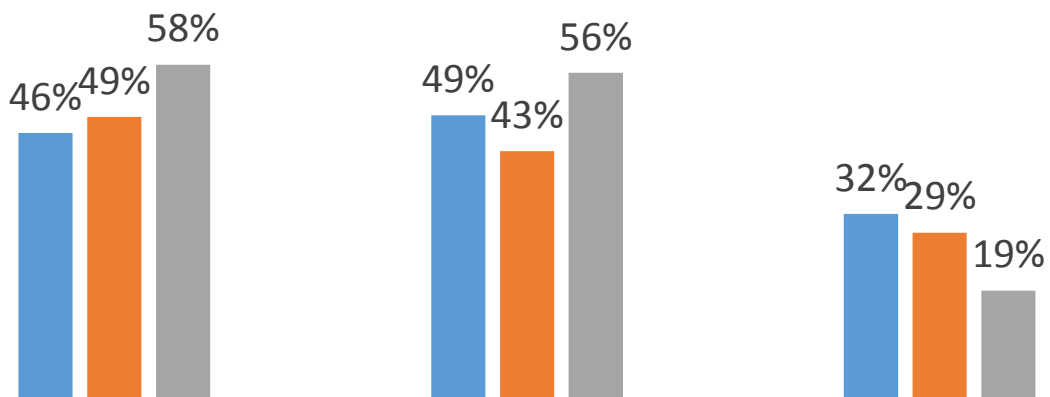
■ 18-23 ■ 24-32 ■ 33+

Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with each of these statements: Married couples who no longer want to be in a romantic relationship should definitely get a formal divorce; Just because the spark is gone in a marriage doesn't mean you should get a divorce. n for 18-23=145; n for 24-32=298, n for 33+=1568.

Attitudes around Open Relationships

When it comes to open relationships, college-aged and post-college-aged Americans seem to think more alike: they are more open

18-23 year-olds are more similar to those 24-32 people 33 and up when it comes to attitudes around open relationships. Generally speaking, younger cohorts are more comfortable with them.



If my partner wanted an open relationship, I would leave him/her.*

I am morally opposed to the idea of open relationships.**

It's ok for a couple to have an open relationship if that's what they really want.*

■ 18-23 ■ 24-32 ■ 33+

Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with each of these statements: If my partner wanted an open relationship, I would leave him/her; I am morally opposed to the idea of open relationships; It's ok for a couple to have an open relationship if that's what they really want. n for 18-23=145; n for 24-32=298, n for 33+=1568.

*Differences between 33+ and each of the other age cohorts are statistically significant.

**Differences between 24-32 and 33+ are statistically significant.

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Thank you!

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