

Best man, maid of honor ...and marital counselor?

By Jason Williams, Psychology Today

Recent research has found couples who participate in premarital education have stronger marriages than those who get hitched without such preparation.

Researchers at the University of Utah and the University of Minnesota analyzed 23 studies conducted over the past 30 years to examine the effectiveness of premarital counseling programs. They found that couples who received counseling scored 30 percent higher on tests that rated their level of communication and overall satisfaction with their spouses.

“No one thinks it’s weird that you have to get driver’s training to drive,” says Jason S. Carroll, Ph.D., assistant professor of marriage, family and human development at Univ. of Utah and lead author of the study.

“Yet, for whatever reason, we don’t see marriage, relationships and parenting as areas we need to learn about.”

Premarital education often includes teaching couples about conflict resolution, marital expectation, intimacy issues, communication skills, and financial management.