

### Experts Urge Complete Planning Before Marriage

(KAIR)--According to the National Center for Health Statistics, 6.3 out of every 1,000 Kansas residents got married in 2011. However, over half of them 3.9 out of every 1,000 got divorced that same year. With such a high rate of marriages ending, experts are urging couples to prepare for a marriage beyond the actual ceremony.

K-State Research and Extension family systems specialist Charlotte Shoup Olsen says couples should really get to know each other before the wedding, and the best way to do this is through observation. For example, how does this person like to observe special days in their lives? You can also pick up on different, subtle clues they make give of, like sometimes, they like to be not as serious as they usually are.

As part of the process of getting to know each other, Olsen says couples should talk about their hopes, dreams, and plans for the future. For example, if you want to start a family, this is probably something you should make your partner aware of before the wedding. Also, finances are very important. Olsen says that too often, someone enters into a marriage and takes on debt they were not aware of.

No relationship is perfect, and marriage is no exception. When disagreements arise, Olsen says couples must face them in a way that does not disrespect the other person. If you can't handle these situations in gentle, respectful ways, disagreements are part of it.

More information on families and marriage is available through county and district extension offices, and on the extension website [ksre.ksu.edu](http://ksre.ksu.edu).

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