

Senior Graduation Project Abstract

Fifty percent of all marriages end in divorce. Family structure plays a major role in the achievement and success children's lives; therefore, divorce places a child's overall well-being at a significant disadvantage. Parents who are considering divorce need to understand the ramifications for themselves but more importantly, their children. **Children of divorce are prone to develop academic, behavioral, social and emotional disorders as compared to children raised in two-parent households.**

The Senior Graduation Project included research regarding the impact of family structure and parental actions on the achievement and success of children. A child who grows up in a family with divorced or separated parents is prone to developing violent behavior, struggles in school and academics, depression, as well as other negative outcomes. Conversely, a child who is raised with two biological, married parents is less likely to experience cognitive, emotional and social problems. Children who are deprived of a solid family structure are likely to have trouble maintaining relationships, experience chronic problems, become depressed or do poorly in school.

Academic struggles are most prominent among children of divorce. Fifty-six percent of all children who experience divorce fall behind in their studies and receive lower grades in school. A large percentage of children are also prone to repeating grade levels and dropping out of school. Emotional and physiological problems are seen in children in the early teen and teenage years. Sixty-three percent of children have some kind of psychological problem that results in anxiety, sadness, moodiness, phobia and depression. Children with divorced parents exhibit more behavioral problems than children with continuously married parents. Younger children who experience divorce often regress in behavior, while adolescents may engage in dangerous behaviors, such as drug and alcohol use. Forty-three percent of children show aggression in their behavior towards their parents, as well.

The product includes an elaborate tri-fold board equipped with charts and graphs. In addition a survey followed by the display of results and psychologists' notes will accompany the board. Evidentiary statistics and facts in research will justify the product purpose.

The impact of a divorce is felt by children of all ages and in many aspects of their everyday lives. Substantial studies and research support evidence that a child raised in a family consisting of two biological, married parents has a higher success rate than a child of divorced parents. The emphasis of maintaining an intact family unit is the intent of this project.

*****An abstract is a short, informative and descriptive summary of how the product is an extension of the research-based essay. The abstract should state the thesis, provide an overview of the research, and discuss additional knowledge gained through the research. It should provide a description of the product. Students should explain how the product meets the criteria identified in the score scale. Abstracts should be one typed page of text, single-spaced.

Qualities of a Good Abstract

A properly written abstract consists of the *Title* of the study and the *body* of the abstract. The abstract must be single-spaced. Your abstract's length should not be more than one page of typed text.

Title

The Title of your abstract should be the same as the title of your research paper.

The Body of the Abstract

The abstract is a very brief overview of your ENTIRE study. It tells the reader **WHAT** you did, **WHY** you did it, **HOW** you did it, **WHAT** you found, and **WHAT** it means. The abstract should briefly state the purpose of the research (introduction), how the problem was studied (methods), the principal findings (results), and what the findings mean (discussion and conclusion). It is important to be descriptive but concise—say only what is essential, using no more words than necessary to convey meaning.

ABSTRACT WORKSHEET

Use one or two concise sentences to summarize the most important aspects of your project for each action listed below.

Project Title (the same as the title of your paper)

Introduction (What is this project about? Why is this project interesting or important?)

Thesis (What point were you trying to make? Why?)

Methods (Briefly explain your procedure)

Results (What information did you find that supported your thesis?)

Discussion (How is the project an extension of the essay?)

GUIDELINES FOR THE PRODUCT

1. The product must be student-generated. Students must design and develop the product. For example, students cannot purchase and assemble a model kit as a product. However, if a student designs a model, builds it from raw materials and uses it to show application/synthesis of knowledge acquired from research, that would be acceptable.
2. The product abstract/proposal must be approved by the academic advisor and project coordinator.
3. The product is tangible evidence of the effort and time invested in the endeavor to meet the criteria established for the product. The student should be able to show that the product is an extension, application and synthesis of the research and has practical applications in the real world.
4. The product is tangible evidence that reflects applications of learning, critical thinking skills, problem-solving skills, teamwork, and personal employability skills, such as responsibility, persistence, and independence.
5. The conception, development and refinement of the product created must match the identified need or desire. This phase of the graduation project offers students an opportunity to connect educational aspirations with real-world career or community-service opportunities.
6. The quality of the product created should reflect a minimum of fifteen (15) hours of work or experience in a setting related to the research topic.
7. The product must be adequately documented with photographs, logs, letters, reflective journal entries and other forms of documentation.
8. Students should avoid choosing products that might require excessive expenses, as the state does not provide funding for student graduation projects.
9. Successful completion of a graduation project is not dependent upon the amount of money invested in the graduation project.

EXAMPLES OF PRODUCTS

Thesis: The benefits of a walking program that maintains a target heart rate for twenty minutes are increased energy, a reduction in coronary diseases and the maintenance of a healthy weight.

Product: The student will design, implement and document a walking program for a targeted group.

Experience: The student will use the walking program himself or herself, or in conjunction with a trainer at a gym or in the community.

Thesis: Students who have special needs in high school are not always welcomed into the mainstream student population. Developing a program that allows students with special needs to interact with the mainstream population will heighten understanding and development of compassion for students with special needs.

Product: The student designs and promotes the "lunch buddy" program that pairs special-needs students and regular education students to eat together in the cafeteria once or more times per week.

Experience: The student will work with students for programs such as Special Olympics or as a classroom aid.

Thesis: Stricter laws against piracy will decrease the millions of dollars annually lost by software developers.

Product: The student will design a Web site including links to related sites and legislation that explores the negative impact of piracy on software developers.

Experience: The student will complete an internship or apprenticeship with a software designer to create the program. Part of the experience hours will focus on the student developing the software program.
