

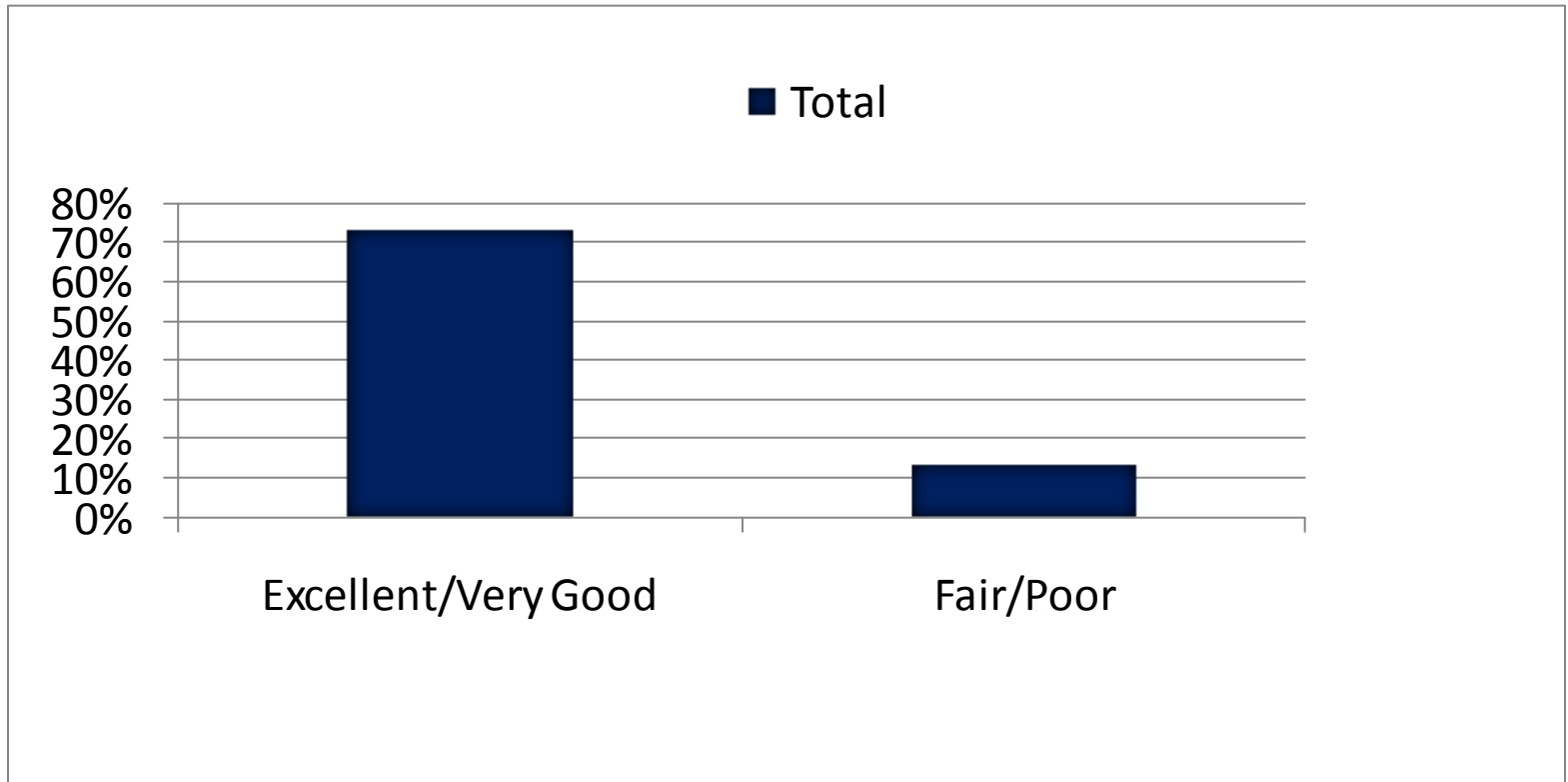
# Aleinu Marital Satisfaction Survey II, 2009

- **Frank Buchweitz**  
*Orthodox Union, New York*
- **Deborah Fox, LCSW**  
*Jewish Family Services of Los Angeles*
- **David Pelcovitz, PhD**  
*Yeshiva University, New York*
- **Eliezer Schnall, PhD**  
*Yeshiva University, New York*

# Respondents

- **Total = 3,670**
  - 41% Male
  - 59% Female
  
- **Country of Origin:**
  - 83 % USA
  - 11% Israel
  - 4% Canada
  - 1% UK
  - 1% Other

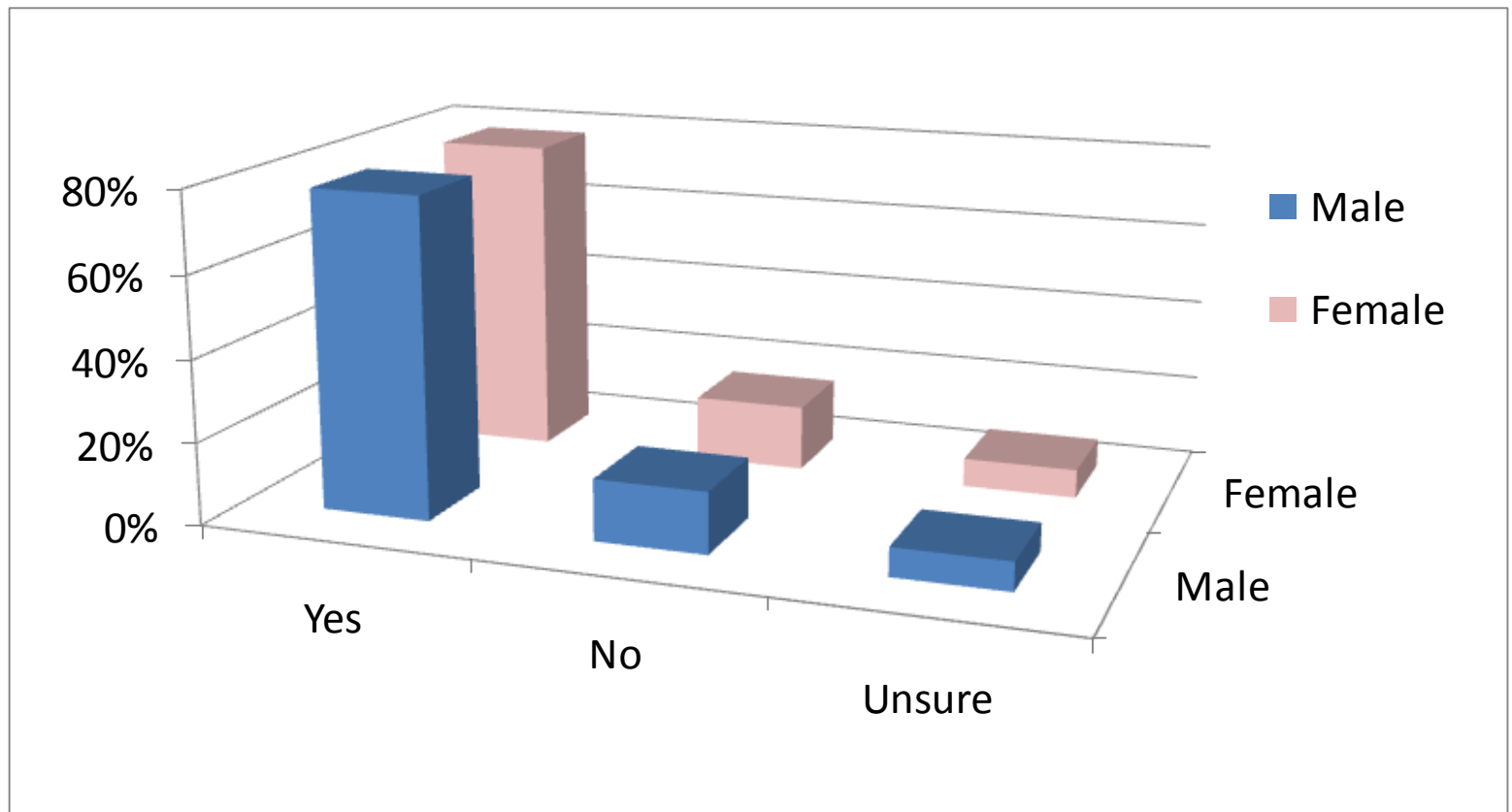
# Marital Rating



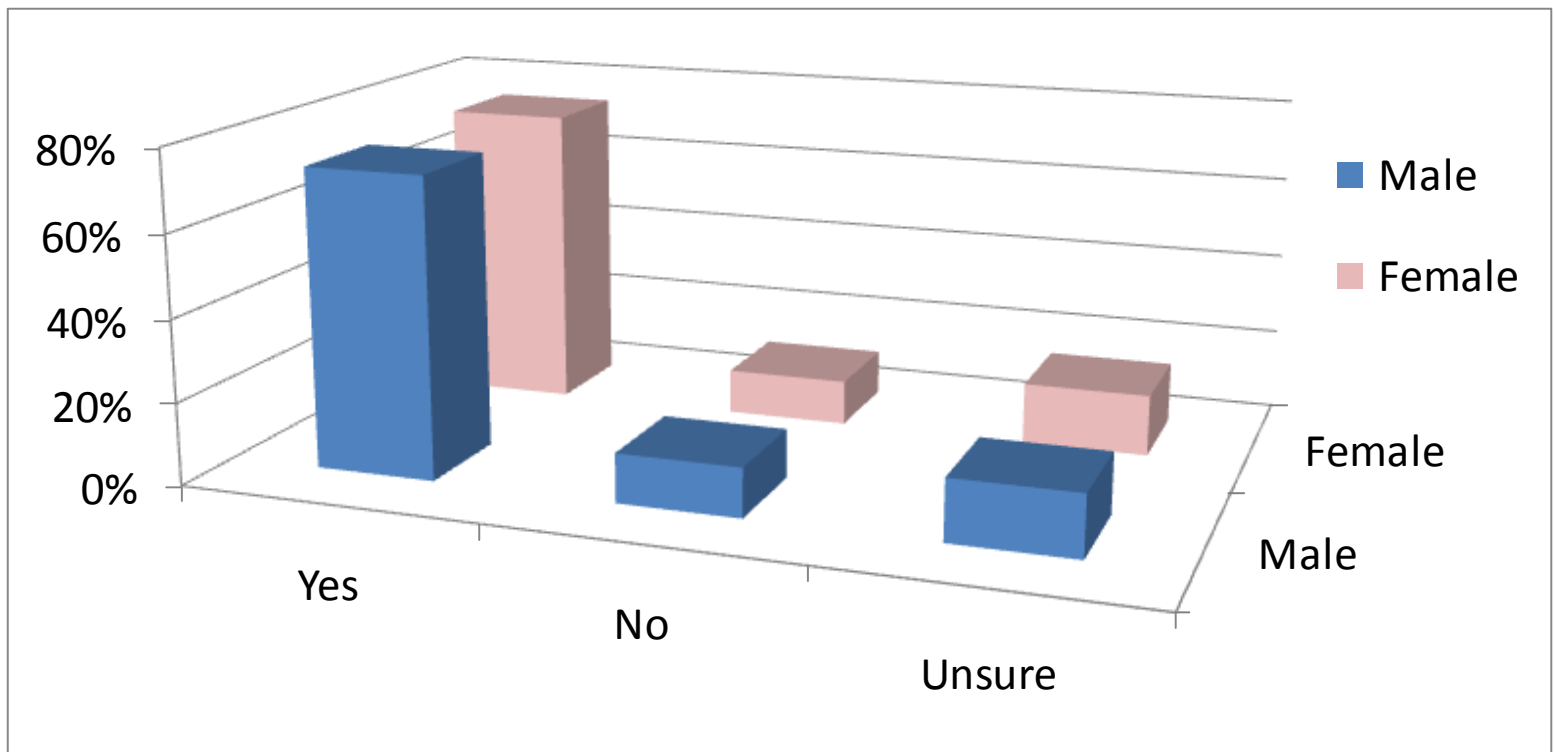
# National Comparisons: NORC (General Social Survey)

- AMSS II Orthodox Jewish sample, percent rating marriage as excellent/very good:
  - Men= 72%
  - Women=74%
- Percentage of married U.S. adults who said that their marriages were very happy:
  - Men= 62.9%
  - Women=59.5%

# Overall, does your spouse meet your expectations of marriage?



# If you had the chance to turn back the clock, knowing what you know now, would you marry your spouse?



# Religious Couples Generally Have Happier Marriages

- “Many studies indicate that couples who participate regularly in religious activities (e.g. church attendance) report greater marital happiness and satisfaction and may be less likely to divorce compared to their less religious counterparts”

- Curtis, K & Ellison, C. (2002) Religious heterogamy and marital conflict, *Journal of Family Issues*, 23(4) 551-576

# Marital Satisfaction

## Length of Marriage

## Mean

• Less than 1 year:	4.45
• 1-2 years:	4.29
• 3-5 years:	4.19
• 6-10 years:	4.05
• 11-20 years:	3.86
• 20-30 years:	3.78
• over 30 years:	4.01

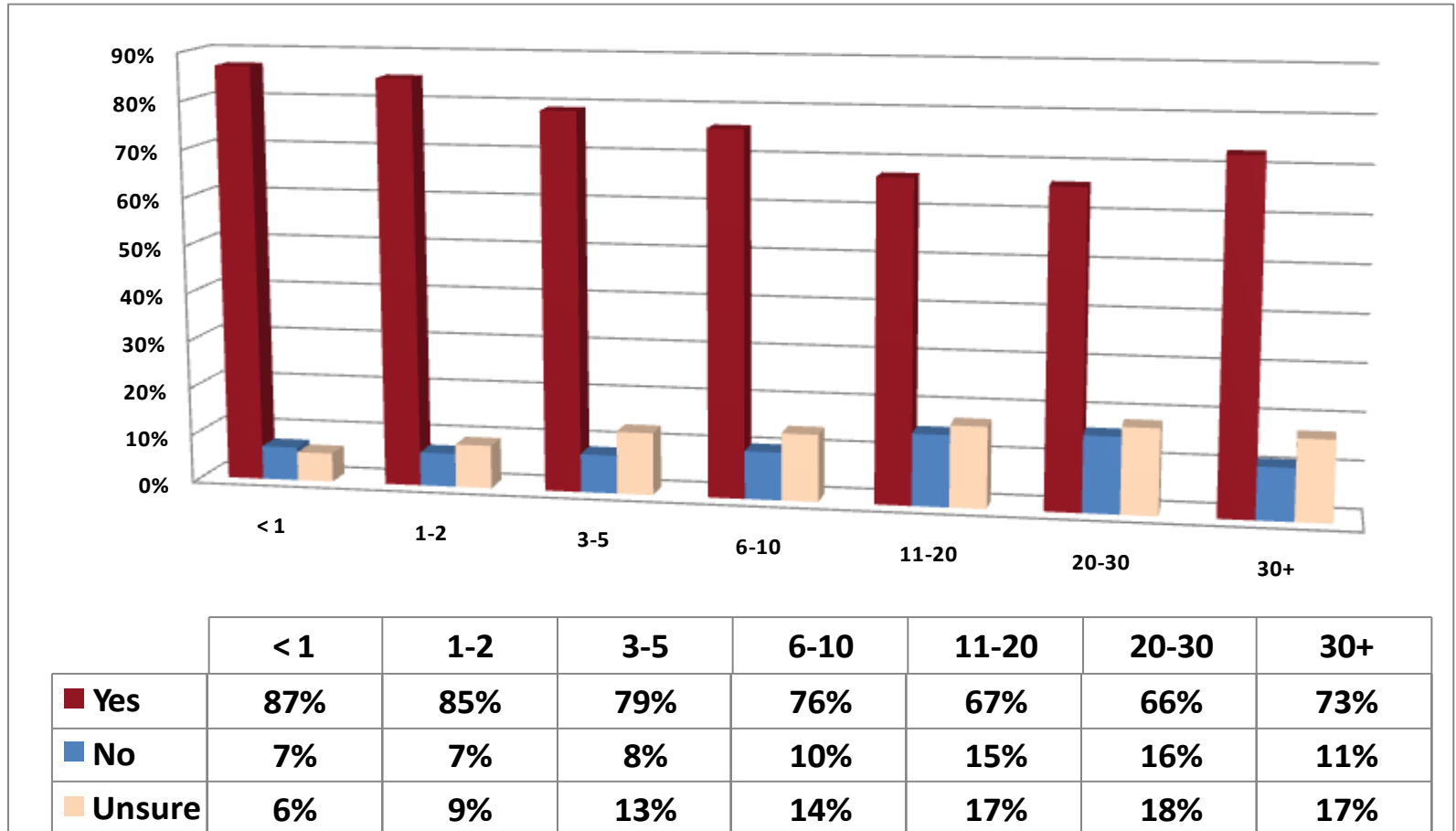
Statistically Significant ( $p < .001$ )

# Marital Rating



Length of Marriage (in years)

# If you had the chance to turn back the clock, knowing what you know now, would you marry your spouse?



**Length of Marriage (in years)**

# National Comparisons

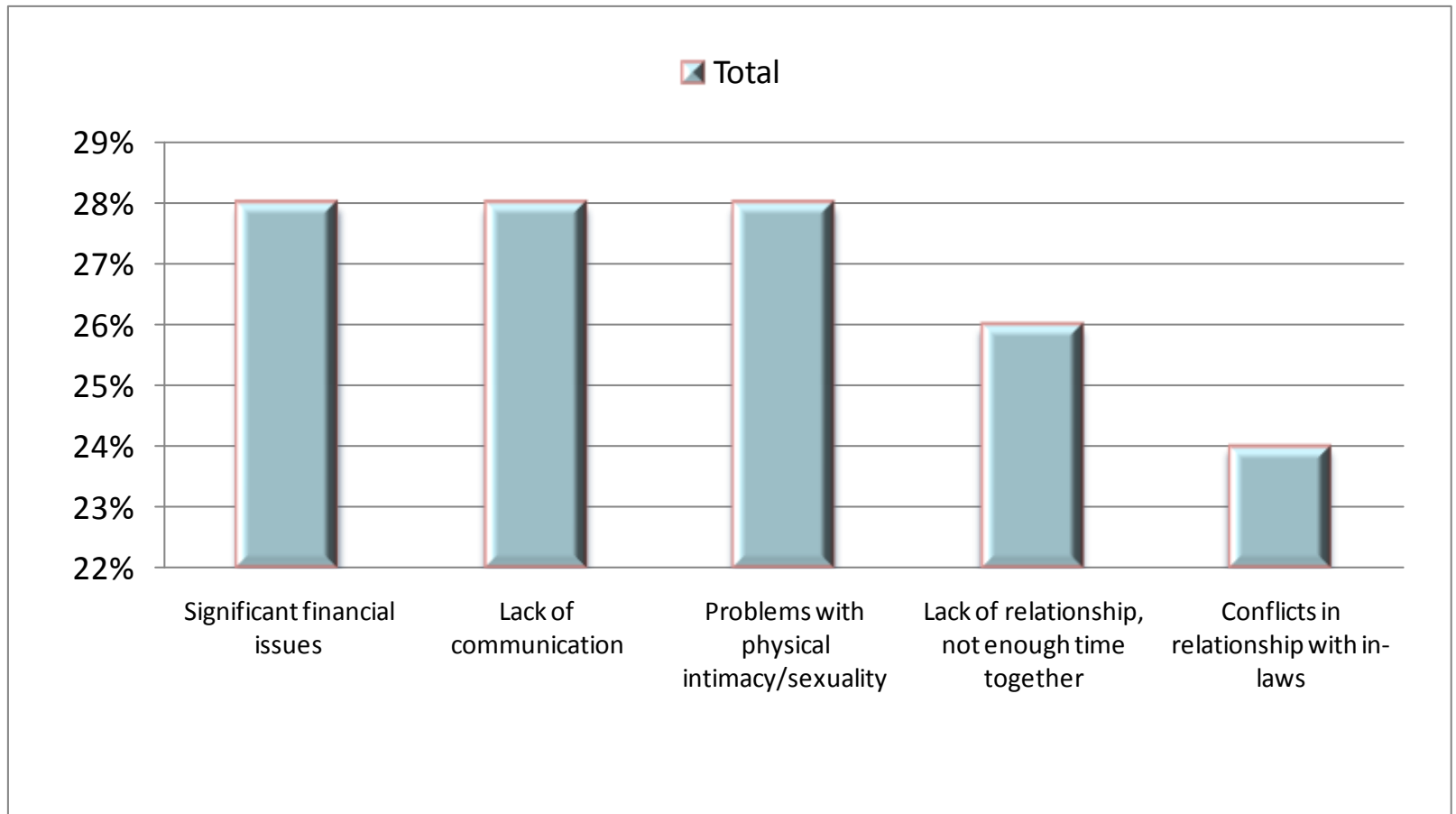
- The U-shaped curve found in our study is typical of marital research in the general community.
- “An analysis of two surveys of 8,929 men and women in first marriages found a U-shaped curve... During the first 20-24 years of marriage, the longer a couple have been married, the less satisfied they tend to be. Then the association between marital satisfaction and length of marriage begins to turn positive. At 35 to 44 years of marriage, a couple tend to be even more satisfied than during the first four years.”
- Human Development (2009) Papalia, McGraw Hill, page 532.

# General Research in Secular World on Sources of Conflict

- Children
- Money
- Household tasks
- Time
- Sexual Issues
- In-laws
- Whether to have a(nother) child

National Survey of Families and Households-  
Journal of Family Issues, 23:4, (2002) 551-576, Curtis & Ellison

# Top Five Stressors: Personal/Familial (Extremely/Somewhat Stressful)



# Stress Factors: Significant Financial Issues



# Stress Factors: Lack of Communication



# Stress Factors: Problem with Physical Intimacy/Sexuality



# Stress Factors: Lack of relationship, Not Enough Time Together



# Other Marital Stressors

## **Early Marriage** ( $p < .001$ )

- Decisions about Birth Control
- Infertility
- Use of Inappropriate Internet Sites
- Excessive Time on the Internet

## **Later Marriage** ( $p < .001$ )

- Medical Illness

# Family Income and “Off the Derech” (at risk) Children

- Respondents with household income between \$25-50K reported significantly less stress from an “off the derech”(at-risk) child compared with those earning:  
\$100-150K ( $p < .05$ )  
\$150K and above ( $p < .01$ )
- The above noted trend is consistent with previous research finding higher risk in more affluent adolescents (Luthar, 2002)

# Blended Families and “Off the Derech” (at risk) Children

- Divorced and remarried respondents are more likely to feel marital stress related to “off the derech”(at-risk) children, compared with those in first marriages.

Remarried:	mean = 1.57
First marriage:	mean = 1.24

Statistically Significant ( $p < .001$ )

# First Marriages and Remarriages

- Respondents in first marriages report greater stress from conflicts with in-laws ( $p < .001$ ).
- Divorced and remarried respondents report greater stress from financial issues ( $p < .001$ ).

# Baalei Teshuva and Stressors

- **Baalei Teshuva report greater marital stress from:**
  - At risk children ( $p < .001$ )
  - Conflicts regarding chinuch of children ( $p < .001$ )
  - Lack of communication ( $p < .01$ )
  - Relationship ( $p < .001$ )
  - Intimacy ( $p < .01$ )
  - Religious differences ( $p < .001$ )
  - Finances ( $p < .001$ )
  - Lack of social network ( $p < .01$ )

\*Important note: Although statistically significant, the absolute differences were relatively small.

# What are your expectations within your marriage based on?

- **Rabbis:**

Married 5 years or less: 32%

Married Over 30 years: 11%

- **Kallah Teacher:**

Married 5 years or less: 16%

Married Over 30 years: 1%

- **Chosson Teacher:**

Married 5 years or less: 8%

Married Over 30 years: 1%

( $p < .001$ )

# What are your expectations within your marriage based on?

- **Family/Parents** ( $p < .01$ )
  - Married 5 years or less: 68%
  - Married Over 30 years: 60%
- **Community Standards** ( $p < .001$ )
  - Married 5 years or less: 42%
  - Married Over 30 years: 30%
- **Friends** ( $p < .01$ )
  - Married 5 years or less: 32%
  - Married Over 30 years: 25%

# What are your expectations within your marriage based on?

- **Books/Magazines**

Married 5 years or less:	12%
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Married Over 30 years:	5%
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- **Hollywood/Media**

Married 5 years or less:	8%
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Married Over 30 years:	2%
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(p < .001)