

Three RCHS seniors balance school, love, marriage

BY MACKENZIE LAMB

Everybody, everywhere has a different definition of marriage. The scriptural definition is, "the blending together of two lives, two personalities of the opposite sex for as long as the two shall live in this world. It's the building of a home that respects the law of God and protects the morals of mankind."

Everybody, everywhere has a different opinion of the key elements needed for a successful marriage. Basically, it takes two committed people, who are willing to love, life, grow, and work together through good and bad times. There is one idea the majority of the population believes to be true: teen marriages just don't work.

That's not always the case.

Twenty-five years after exchanging vows at the age of sixteen, Jack and Dawn Stallsworth, who teach math at RCHS, are still married.

They dated for a quick nine month span and, without a doubt in their minds, they chose to exchange vows. Mrs. Stallsworth admits that being a teen still going to school and being married was stressful.

"You have the responsibility of cleaning house, washing dishes, laundry, fixing meals, managing money and homework added to that," says Stallsworth.

Still after twenty-five years of stress the two are more in love than ever before, and she doesn't regret her decision to marry young, but recommends, "Be a kid while you still can. Marriage isn't all fun and games."

Lisa and Chester Lamb have been married near twenty-one years. The catch? They too married as teens. Lisa opted to quit school and concentrate on the marriage and providing for her expected child. The young couple worked together to make ends meet, her pulling hours at Long John Silver's and him clocking in at Southern States. They now have two kids, own two homes, have great jobs, and are expecting their first grandchild.

"It was hard, yes, but together we made it. If that isn't love I don't know what is," said Ms. Lamb.

These lasting couples should provide hope for the three seniors



Senior Melissa Thompson and 2001 RCHS graduate Granville Graves.

married within the past few months.

Sandra Dawson-Carpenter and Greg Carpenter were married October 20, 2001. Sandra seems to work everything into a well bal-

anced schedule.

"I get up at 6:00 am, sometimes even 4:00 depending on when Greg has to be at work, and get ready for school," she says. "I leave school at 11:15, go home, do a load of

clothes, then leave for work. After work I come home and cook supper. Next I usually straighten the house, do my homework, and get ready for bed."

Tina Powell-Payne and Dustin Payne were wed November 17. The two had dated for two years and two months and thought it was time to futher their relationship.

"There is more responsibility, but there's also more freedom. We get to decide on things in our own way," says Mrs. Payne.

Melissa Thompson-Graves and Granville Graves exchanged vows November 24. Her plans were altered for the future.

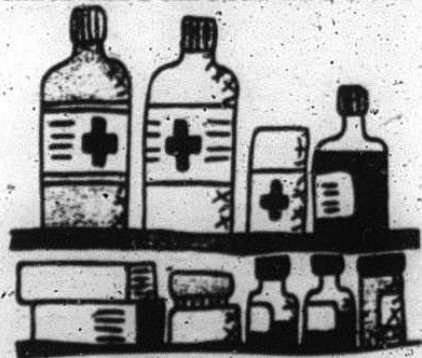
"I plan on going to part-time college and being a mom. After high school graduation my family will be the main priority."

These three couples may not end up as a teen statistic on failed marriages. Just because they married young doesn't mean it can't work out.

What do you think about getting married when still in high school? Let us know in a letter to the editor!

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