

Childhood photos could hold the secret to your marriage

By [Daily Mail Reporter](#)

Last updated at 12:17 AM on 14th April 2009

If you ever wondered whether your marriage might end in divorce, the answer might lie in a family album.

According to scientists it is possible to predict whose marriages will fail by looking at photographs taken decades earlier.

Those with the brightest smiles are more than three times as likely to have a strong marriage than those who frown their way through family outings as a child or teenager.



Your future happiness could be on show in a family snapshot

Even snaps taken at the age of five yield clues about the path a person's life will take.

'Smile intensity predicted whether or not participants divorced at some point in their lives,' said the researchers. 'The less intensely participants smiled, the more likely they would be divorced later in life.'

To make the link, the researchers asked almost 650 adults for pictures taken during their final year of school and rated the brightness of their smiles.

The men and women ranged in age between 21 and 87, meaning some of the snaps were 70 years old.

The scientists, from DePauw University in Indiana, then asked the volunteers if they had ever been divorced - and matched their answers with the data on their smiles.

Those with the weakest smiles were more than three times as likely to have been through a divorce than those who beamed their way through their teenage years, the journal *Motivation and Emotion* reports.

A second experiment, which included pictures taken when people were as young as five confirmed the finding.

The researchers think it is possible that happy sorts are more likely to try to work through rocky spots in relationships.

Alternatively, those with a sunny disposition may marry similarly upbeat souls. It is also possible that happiness is contagious.