

For Immediate Release

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Number of Unmarried Parents on the Rise

1.25 million babies (one third of all births) are born each year in the U.S. to unmarried parents. Many people just assume these babies are born to single moms, when in fact 41% of these births are to unmarried cohabitating couples. People no longer get married then have the baby. A significant portion of couples never marry, or marry years after becoming parents.

Hollywood has set the example in this instance. Couples such as:

Brad Pitt and Angelina Jolie
Heath Ledger and Michelle Williams
Nicole Ritchie and Joel Madden
Halle Berry and Gabrielle Aubry
Naomi Watts and Liev Schreiber
Matthew McConaughey and Camila Alves
Goldie Hawn and Kurt Russell
Susan Sarandon and Tim Robbins
Madonna and her bodyguard (the father of her first child)
Mia Farrow and Woody Allen
Jessica Lange and Sam Shepard
Farah Fawcett and Ryan O'Neal

share or have shared children in a partnership outside marriage. Many other famous couples become parents first and later choose to marry, such as Annette Bening and Warren Beatty, Meg Ryan and Dennis Quaid, and Madonna and Guy Ritchie (the father of her second child).

Unmarried couples face huge challenges in our marriage-centric society. Married couples are automatically legal parents together, while an unmarried father must go through a legal procedure to become the "real" father.

Unmarried couples face other challenges, such discrimination in adoption or fertility treatments, unfair income tax treatment, as well as a general lack of understanding by doctors, teachers, and neighbors. Society and the legal system are not set up to recognize and support unmarried parents, and so many find themselves feeling ignored or misunderstood.

Unmarried with Children: The Complete Guide for Unmarried Families (Adams Media, August 2008, ISBN: **978-1-59869-587-8**) is a guide to the confusing landscape unmarried families must face. Written by Brette Sember, a former attorney and expert in the area of non-traditional families, with a technical mental health review by Philip Hall, Ph.D., this complete guide offers all the information unmarried families need, such as information about:

- Adoption and Infertility Treatments for Unmarried Couples
- Rights of Unmarried Parents (Raising Children Together or Apart)
- Choosing a Last Name for Your Child
- Creating Legal Authority for an Unmarried Partner-Parent
- Unmarried Step-Parenting
- Children's Rights in Unmarried Families
- Financial Organization for Unmarried Families
- Paternity
- Arranging Court-Ordered or Independent Child Support
- Explaining Your Situation to Other People
- Wills, Inheritances, Guardians, Benefits and More
- How to Successfully Parent in Your Situation
- How to Deal with a Break Up
- Common Law Marriages and Domestic Partnerships

Unmarried with Children also addresses the concerns of other unmarried parents, such as gay couples, single mothers, and parents who are no longer a couple, but are co-parenting to raise their child. Births to single women over age 35 recently doubled and rates of non-marital births among single white mothers rose 92%. According to the American Academy of Pediatrics, 9 million children have at least one gay parent and the American Bar Association states that there were 5.5 million unmarried partner households (which include both gay and unmarried heterosexual couples) in the U.S. in 2000.

Review copies are available. The author is available for interviews and articles on this topic. For more information, visit www.UnmarriedwithChildren.net.