

Is It Better for Kids When Their Parents Are Married?

Yesterday I ran across a *Washington Post* piece entitled, "[I love my boyfriend, but I never want to get married](#)." In it, author Rachel Bussel describes how she and her partner of four years have lived as husband and wife in every imaginable experience – except for the wedding ceremony.

Furthermore, Ms. Bussel insists that she has no intention or desire to make their commitment to each other official, not even because she and her partner are trying to have a child together.

"I don't argue with anyone about this outright, but I'm sure that being married doesn't magically make you a better parent, just as being unmarried doesn't mean you're lacking in the ability to take care of a child. As far as I'm concerned, they're unrelated. ..."

But even my boyfriend, who's been staunchly on my side of the no-marriage issue, has mentioned that he thinks it's 'better' for kids when their parents are married. I'm not so sure."

Unfortunately for Ms. Bussel, feelings don't always match up with facts. Research shows that children who live in cohabiting homes:

- Experience more physical, sexual, and emotional [abuse](#).
- Exhibit worse social [behavior](#) and lower confidence levels.
- Enjoy less [life stability](#) as families are more prone to break-ups.
- Encounter greater [poverty](#) both as children and potentially as adults, as children from cohabiting families are more likely to drop out of school and thus

have lower life earnings.

Why do you think this is?

Image Credit: Ken Colwell