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New York Divorce and Family Law Blog

[The Rights of Unwed Fathers](#)

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The rights of unmarried fathers of children were in the news with the recent reports about Sarah Palin's daughter's break up with her boyfriend. I was, in fact, quoted in one such article that appeared in the [New York Daily News](#).

Like their married counterparts, unwed fathers have the right to custody and visitation of the children. That the parties did not wed does not in any way limit the father's parental rights. As in all cases, the standard of visitation/custody is "best interests of the children."

The flip side of parenting is the financial responsibilities. The unwed non-custodial parent, whether it be the mother or the father, has the responsibility of paying child support for child. In New York, child support is calculated by applying statutory percentages (17% for one child, 25% for two children, 29% for three children) to the parent's gross income, with limited deductions. Click to see the a [child support worksheet](#).