

Family

bonding for the modern tribe

Family dinner 2.0, Thanksgiving crafts, Hotel chains that love kids, The secret to saving on groceries



Overheard on Facebook

"Love is imprinted on the heart, not on a legal document." —Angela A.

Tying the "Not"

*More parents are choosing to live together ring-free.
But is it the best thing for the kids?*

BY ELINA BOLOKHOVA

64%
IN 2002

PERCENTAGE OF ADULTS MARRIED AT BIRTH OF FIRST CHILD

57%
IN 2010

Remember "first comes love, then comes marriage, then comes baby in a baby carriage"? That's so last millennium. Now roughly one in five women will have her first child while living with a male partner, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (That figure was one in ten in 2002.)

In an informal poll of unmarried *Parenting* readers on Facebook, money—or lack thereof—was

cited as a main reason for not tying the knot. ("We chose a mortgage over a reception," says Jennifer G.) Others feel it's unnecessary. "We have an eleven-month-old son, and we are so happy it should be illegal," says Tiffany B. "And I'm a wedding planner!"

Is this situation good for the kids? Two thirds of children will see their cohabiting parents break up by age 12, while only

one quarter of married-before-children parents will divorce, reports the National Marriage Project. But children will get from the relationship what the parents give them, ring or no ring, says Sheridan Kesselman, a family and marriage counselor in Sherman Oaks, CA. "Children thrive in a two-parent household where there's love and commitment, regardless of the configuration."