

## **PRESS RELEASE**

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### **Unmarried parents – numbers on the rise**

Thirty-six percent of all births were outside marriage in the first quarter of 2012, according to the latest figures released by the Central Statistics Office (CSO) today. This represents a significant increase in the number of births occurring outside marriage rising from 34% in 2011.

In addition, the percentage of births to unmarried parents living at the same address (cohabitants) has risen to 57% of births outside marriage – from 54% in 2011.

In Treoir's National Specialist Information Centre we continue to be astounded at the number of unmarried parents who are not aware of their rights (or lack of them) in respect of their children. We cannot stress too highly how important it is that unmarried parents be aware of their vulnerable legal situation in relation to their children.

Unmarried parents need to know, for example, that

- a father's name on the birth certificate does not give him guardianship rights in respect of his child
- it is easy to get guardianship rights if the mother agrees
- it is good for children to know both parents
- where parents are cohabiting the father does not have any automatic legal rights in respect of his child
- cohabitants have new rights in respect of each other etc.

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Treoir is a membership organisation which promotes the rights of unmarried parents and their children in Ireland.

Treoir operates a National Specialist Information Service for unmarried parents, their families and those involved with them and advocates on their behalf.

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