§ 531. Hearing. The trial shall be by the court without a jury. The mother or the alleged father shall be competent to testify but the respondent shall not be compelled to testify. If the mother is married both she and her husband may testify to nonaccess. If the respondent shall offer testimony of access by others at or about the time charged in the complaint, such testimony shall not be competent or admissible in evidence except when corroborated by other facts and circumstances tending to prove such access. The court may exclude the general public from the room where the proceedings are heard and may admit only persons directly interested in the case, including officers of the court and witnesses.