

## Child Support.

### What Teen Fathers Need to Know.

#### If you are not the person taking care of your child, you have to pay child support.

##### If I am not the main person taking care of my child, can a court make me pay child support?

Yes. If you are a father, you can be required to pay child support if you are not the main person taking care of your child. If you show care and concern for your child, including financial support, you may have the right to custody or visitation.

##### If my child lives with me, and not with the mother, can I get child support from the mother?

Yes. If you are the person taking care of your child, you have the right to get child support from your child's mother. If you apply for state assistance, the State will start this process. If you don't receive state assistance, call Child Support Enforcement. The telephone number is on the back of this brochure.

##### I was asked to sign paternity forms. What does this mean?

Paternity means legally identifying the biological father of a child. It is very hard to change paternity papers once the forms are signed. If you have any doubt about this, talk to a lawyer before you sign these forms. If you are the legal father, you will have to pay to support the child until s/he is an adult.

##### What do I have to do to establish paternity?

If you and the mother were married at the time the baby was born, you are assumed to be the father. If you marry the mother after the baby is born, you should talk with a lawyer to find out if you are assumed to be the father for child support.

If you are not married to your baby's mother, you can establish paternity at the hospital when the baby is born, or by signing legal papers later on, or through DNA tests and a court order. It is easiest to do when the baby is born.

If you think you are the father of a child and you would like to establish paternity, you can do this at the Probate Court in the town where either the mother or the child lives. There are some programs to help pay for a DNA test, if needed. Contact your local Department of Social Services (DSS) office to find out about these programs.

Paternity must be established before either parent can collect child support.

##### If I don't establish paternity, do I still have to pay support?

If you don't establish paternity and the mother of your baby applies for any cash or medical assistance from the State, she will be required to provide information about the baby's father. The State will then go to court to establish paternity and collect child support from the father.



##### How can I find out if there has been a paternity or support judgment naming me?

To find out if there has been a paternity or child support judgment naming you, call the clerk's office at your local Superior Court or go to [www.jud.state.ct.us](http://www.jud.state.ct.us) and on left, click on "Case Look-Up," select "Civil/Family" and then "Party Name."

##### How much child support will I have to pay?

The amount of child support you will have to pay depends on how much money you make. The court will enter a weekly order based on the income of both parents. The court can also order you to pay "back due" child support, which means money that was needed for the child before the case went to court. This should be based on your ability to pay at that time.

##### What if I have been ordered to pay child support and I can't afford it?

You can get help to adjust the amount you are ordered to pay. In some cases (for example, if you lose your job), you can ask the court to adjust the amount you have to pay. Remember that the court can adjust the amount up or down, so you should talk with a lawyer before doing this. Support Enforcement may be able to help you get the case into court.

##### You should never ignore a court order to pay.

If you do, the court could suspend your driver's license, take part of your paycheck, or you may be held in contempt and possibly be arrested and locked up.

Your child  
has the right  
to be  
supported  
by both  
parents.

### Need Help?

**If you have questions about child support**  
Call Child Support Enforcement at 1-800-228-KIDS.

**If you have a question or need information  
about child support and your legal rights**  
Call the CCA Teen Legal Clinic:  
(860)570-5327 or (203)223-8975.



**Center for Children's Advocacy**  
65 Elizabeth Street, Hartford, CT 06105  
[www.kidscounsel.org](http://www.kidscounsel.org)



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What should  
I do if I owe  
Child  
support?