

## Why Is Paternity so important? For the Child:

- Legal record of the identity of the child's parents.
- Father's name on their birth certificate.
- Information on family medical history.
- Emotional benefits of knowing his or her father.
- Financial support from both parents that includes child support, social security, veteran's benefits, military allowances, and inheritance.
- Health insurance from either parent, if available.

## For the Father:

- Legal establishment of parental rights.
- Father's name on the birth certificate.
- Right to seek court ordered custody or visitation

This information has been provided by the  
KERN COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF

**CHILD**   
**SUPPORT**  
SERVICES  
*Kids Come First*

1300 18th St. Bakersfield, CA 93301

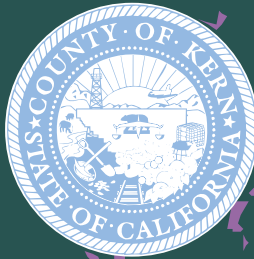
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[www.ithappened2me.org](http://www.ithappened2me.org)

or

[ithappened2me@co.kern.ca.us](mailto:ithappened2me@co.kern.ca.us)



This brochure is provided through the "It Happened 2me, It Could Happen 2u2", a collaborative teen parenting project between the Kern County Department of Child Support Services and the Kern High School District's Career Resource Department.

How do I get help?

# Teen and 20 Something FATHERS

How much is child support?

**IT HAPPENED 2ME  
IT COULD HAPPEN 2U2**

**Teen Dads** are often overlooked in the big picture of teen pregnancy. Teen fathers are affected by parenthood too. They need help, advice, and encouragement to take responsibility both for the child they have fathered and for their own education and future.

#### **How can I find out If I owe Child Support?**

You can call 661-868-6575, or visit the Kids Count Resource Center located in the child support services office at 1300 18th Street (corner of 18th & L).

#### **How much Child Support do I have to pay?**

It all depends on how much money you and the mother of the child makes. Even if you are unemployed or a student you still have to provide support for your child.

#### **What happens if I don't pay?**

If you don't pay child support the following could happen:

- Your drivers license could be suspended
- Personal property can be taken, including money in the bank
- You will owe additional interest on the amount you owe
- Your passport could be suspended or denied.

#### **If the child lives with me, do I still have to pay child support?**

No, if you are the one taking care of the child, then you can apply for child support from the mother. You just have to apply at your local child support office.

#### **What is Paternity?**

The legal acknowledgment of the parental relationship between a man and a child.

#### **What can I do to establish Paternity?**

There are three ways that paternity can be determined:

1. Genetic Testing
2. Court Order
3. Both parents can sign a Declaration of Paternity.

#### **I was asked to sign a Paternity Declaration, what does this mean?**

This means that you accept that you are the legal father of the child, if you have any doubt and you are not married, you can request genetic testing.

#### **What happens after Paternity is established?**

Once Paternity is established the Department of Child Support Services may establish what is called a support order if requested, which will require the parent without custody to legally provide financial and medical support.

#### **How long does it take to establish a case?**

It all depends on the cooperation of you and the mother, but most court orders can take 3 to 6 months to establish.



**CHILD  
SUPPORT**