



Advice to you from Other Dads...

Focus on your child.

Be teachable. Things will get easier with knowledge. Learn as much as possible - keep good notes and organize papers and records.

Communicate often with your lawyer and caseworker.

Identify community programs and use them.

Control yourself and your stress. You can't control other people or the situation – only how you respond to challenges. Be assertively “kind”.

Find someone to talk to – a friend, pastor or a professional. Share your thoughts and feelings with someone you trust.

Focus on the positive. It may be hard but finding something good about each day will lower your stress.

Trying to do it all at once is overwhelming. Focus first on the most important task. You will feel accomplishment by getting it done.

Don't be too hard on yourself for mistakes that you may have made.

Believe in yourself.



KIDS NEED DADS



Pennsylvania endorses the positive involvement of fathers and paternal families to protect children, promote strong families, promote child well-being, and provide timely permanency.

SOURCES AND CITATIONS

U.S. Department of Education 1996, National Household Education Survey (NHES): Parent and Family Involvement on Education, Washington, D.C.

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Fatherhood Initiative Web Site (<http://fatherhood.hhs.gov>)

America's Children: Key National Indications of Well-Being, Table SPECIAL 1. Washington, D.C. Federal Interagency Forum on Child and Family Statistics, 1997.

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. National Center for Health Statistics. Survey on Child Health. Washington, D.C. GPO, 1993.

McBride, Brent A., Sarah K. Schoppe-Sullivan, and Moon-Ho Ho. “The Mediating Role of Father’s School Involvement on Student Achievement.” Applied Developmental Psychology 26 (2005).

Bringing Back The Dads. New Day Services for Children & Families, Fort Worth, TX.

Office of Children & Families in the Courts



Pennsylvania Judicial Center
601 Commonwealth Avenue, Suite 1500
PO Box 61260
Harrisburg, PA 17120-0901
Phone: (717) 231-3300
Fax: (717) 231-3304
Website: www.ocfpcourts.us



YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO:

Be involved in your child's life and make educational, medical and health decisions regarding your child.

Have the same rights and services as the mother of your child.

Visit your child.

Ask the Court to give you custody of your child or place your child with family.

Have a lawyer even if you cannot afford one.

Receive notice of, attend and participate in all court hearings. (even if you are incarcerated).



To admit or deny any allegations of abuse or neglect that are made against you.

Be involved with planning for your child with the child welfare agency.

Be notified by the child welfare agency about any

decisions made on behalf of your child.

Have a relationship with your child.

YOUR RESPONSIBILITIES:



Being a positive role model for your child.

Respecting your child's mother.

Teaching your child.

Being patient, supportive, showing interest and giving praise to your child.

Attending doctor and dentist appointments, parent/teacher conferences, school activities, athletic events, and other meetings and conferences concerning your child.

Attending all court hearings and meetings.

Providing financial support for your child.

Obeying court orders and completing tasks in your case plan.

Asking paternal relatives to be involved with your child.

Loving your child and being the best dad you can be.

YOUR INVOLVEMENT:

Increases your child's chances of success.

Provides your child with better physical, mental and emotional security.

Increases your child's chances of living with family.

Helps your child learn how to solve problems and build social skills.

Provides your child a positive role model.

Lowers your child's chances for youth suicide.

Improves your child's self-esteem.

Increases your child's chances of leading a positive and productive life.

Lets your child know that you love him/her.

