

I'm a teen parent in Michigan...



What do I need to know about my parenting rights?



Information for this resource provided by MDHHS online resources: www.michigan.gov/childsupport

The state of Michigan has many laws to help you figure out how to manage and share parenting responsibilities. Read on to learn more:



You have the right to establish yourself or someone else as the legal father of your child.

If a couple is married and has a baby, then they are both automatically the child's legal parents. If a person is not married and has a baby, then there are two different ways to establish a legal father, or "establish paternity," for the child. They can either 1) sign a form called the "Affidavit of Parentage" or 2) take a paternity test (this may be done at the hospital, or later through a longer court process).

Establishing legal parentage ensures both parents are able to make decisions for and be involved with the child, and that the child will have support through both parents' insurance and income.

You have the right to make decisions for your child.

Teen parents have the right to make all decisions for their child about healthcare, childcare, schooling, etc. No one (including your own parents or anyone else who isn't the legal custodial parent of your child) can control the decisions you make for your child as long as they are safe and healthy.

Custody, or being a "custodial parent," determines who has the right to make decisions for your child, who spends time with the child, etc. Determining custody is a separate process from establishing legal parentage, and must be done through a court process.



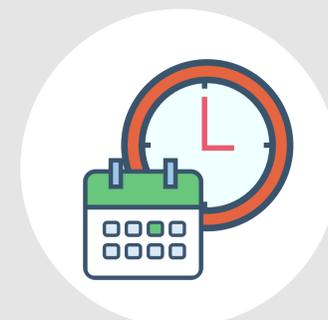
You have the right to arrange for fair child support payments.

Both legal parents are expected to provide money to support their child, even if the two parents aren't together. If you are the parent responsible for most or all of your child's care, then you have a right to ask the other parent to make child support payments. The payment amount may be decided through a court process. You can ask the court to change the child support payment amount, especially if you have a major change in income, and the court must review your request.

It is important that all parents or other caretakers stick to their agreements about child support, custody, and parenting time. Any changes should be discussed together or through the court systems.

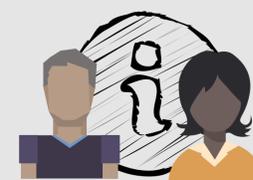
You have the right to figure out a schedule for who spends time with your child.

Both legal parents have a right to spend time with their child, even if you aren't together and even if a parent hasn't been paying child support. This is called "parenting time." If you have a hard time figuring out a schedule, you can go through a court process. You have a right to report it to the court if the other parent is not sticking to the parenting time agreement.



Need more support or information? Connect with legal offices, case managers, or other teen parents to learn more about your parenting rights.

Check out more info for pregnant and parenting teens by visiting mihealthyfamily.org.



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