

Regular Child Support Improves School Achievement



By Greg Abbott
Attorney General of Texas

There is no more important time than the beginning of the school year to remind parents of the importance of making regular child support payments.

It is common knowledge that children depend on child support to provide basic needs like food, shelter, health care, and back-to-school clothing. However, research shows that children who receive regular child support derive more benefits than the financial security that each payment provides. The children of parents who pay their child support have fewer behavior problems, make better grades, and stay in school longer than children who do not receive regular support.

In most instances, non-custodial parents are ordered to pay child support for their children who live in a separate household. But a parent's contribution to a child's well being goes beyond the financial assistance the parent is required to provide. Parents who pay child support are much more likely to take an active role in raising their children. Children with two involved and caring parents are more self-confident, more likely to exercise self

control, and less likely to engage in risky behaviors that result in drug usage and early pregnancies.

I am thankful that most parents faithfully pay court-ordered child support every month without reminders. For parents who need extra encouragement, it is my hope that the new school year will renew their commitment to do the right thing and pay their child support. All children deserve the security that comes from knowing their parents care enough to make regular child support payments.

Parents who need child support services can contact the Child Support Division of my office for assistance. We will help you:

- Locate a non-custodial parent;
- Establish your child's paternity;
- Establish and enforce child support orders;
- Establish and enforce medical support orders;
- Review and adjust child support payments; and
- Collect and distribute child support payments.

To help parents collect child support, the Attorney General's Office accepts applications from mothers, fathers and other individuals who request our services. Customers can apply for services by calling our 24-hour voice response system at (800) 252-8014 or by visiting Child Support Interactive

on the main Attorney General Web site www.oag.state.tx.us. Parents who receive financial assistance through the Texas Department of Human Services automatically receive child support services.

For the state fiscal year that ended August 31, 2003, the Child Support Division collected a record \$1.5 billion in child support. Although the final tally is not in, we are set to break last year's collection record for State Fiscal Year 2004 that ends this month.

I will not be satisfied until all our children receive the financial and medical support their parents are ordered to provide. As your Attorney General, you have my commitment to work tirelessly on behalf of Texas children to collect the support they need to lead healthy and productive lives.

POINTS TO REMEMBER

CHILD SUPPORT

Children Who Receive Child Support:

- Have better health and nutrition
- Have fewer behavior problems
- Make better grades

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ATTORNEY GENERAL OF TEXAS

GREG ABBOTT

Information on this and other topics is available on the Attorney General's Web site at www.oag.state.tx.us.