

# FOC NEWSLETTER

KENT COUNTY FRIEND OF THE COURT

## DID YOU KNOW?

MiChildSupport is a public, secure website that parents can use to access information regarding their existing child support case, apply for child support services, pay child support, create support calculations, and find other information. You may access the site by going to either <https://www.michigan.gov/michildsupport> or <https://www.michigan.gov/micase>. The personal information you enter MUST match what Friend of the Court (FOC) has on file. If you have difficulty signing up, please contact our office to verify the information.

Information that can be accessed on your case includes payment history (detailed payment histories for up to 18 months can be printed), amounts owed, income withholding notices sent, some hearings scheduled by FOC, some bench warrant information, some documents sent by FOC, and detailed notifications of some actions or information. You may also sign up to receive notifications including payment reminders and notifications by email or text by setting the preference on the *Notifications Settings* page.

The Michigan Child Support Formula Calculator used by child support professionals to calculate child support payments is available for you to use. Using this program will give you an idea of what your child support obligation should be. To access the calculator, click [here](#). If you feel child support should change, click [here](#).



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### FALL 2017

#### Friendly reminders:

- The hotline for free preschool in Kent County is 1-616-447-2409.
- Kids need to be up to date on their [immunizations](#) for the start of school.
- Most orders state the child care charge ends August 31 of the school year following a 12<sup>th</sup> birthday.

**We recently made a few changes in child support case manager assignments and so you may now be working with someone new to you. Please note, however, that although you may have a new case manager, he/she is fully able and ready to assist you.**

## URBAN MYTHS DEBUNKED

Myth #1; Children can choose where they want to live at 12 years old.

TRUTH : Children are not able to choose where or whom they want to live with until they are 18 years old. The reasonable preference of the child is only one factor considered when determining custody, as outlined in MCL 722.23

Myth #2 : Friend of the Court charges interest on arrears and the FOC makes money on this charge.

TRUTH : Unless the order specifically requires it, no interest or surcharges have been assessed on past due balances since January 2010. Getting child support payments to families is our top priority. In Kent County, 92.6% of monies collected went to the recipient of support in 2016.



## KENT COUNTY FRIEND OF THE COURT

*Our mission:  
To serve the Court  
and the families of  
Kent County to  
ensure children are  
supported, both  
financially and  
emotionally.*

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Visit Kent County's  
[website](#) for employment  
opportunities with  
Kent County and the FOC.

## “BUT THE KID IS NOT EVEN MINE!”

This is a common statement made to Friend of the Court employees, and it does raise a legitimate question. Why are you paying for a child that is not yours? How were you named the father to begin with?

There are three ways you could be named a father in a child support action. The first way is if you were married to the mother of the child at the time the child was born. The court will automatically name the husband of the mother as the father. The second is by signing an Acknowledgment of Parentage. This document is signed by both parents at the hospital at the time of the child's birth or shortly thereafter. The third way is the court opens a case to establish paternity for a child. If paternity is established by DNA testing or by default (father did not participate in paternity action), then a court order declares who the father is.

If you wish to challenge paternity, then you must file a motion under the Michigan Revocation of Paternity Act (ROPA). THERE ARE STRICT TIME LIMITS FOR YOU TO FILE A MOTION UNDER ROPA, SO IT IS CRITICAL THAT YOU CHALLENGE PATERNITY AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. You are also responsible for any and all support charged prior to the date of filing, so there is a financial incentive to file quickly. Please keep in mind that the Friend of the Court cannot assist you with ROPA motions. Please contact your attorney or visit the Legal Assistance Center on the 5<sup>th</sup> Floor of Kent County Courthouse for more information.

## BACK TO SCHOOL HELP

Back to school is a busy time as well as a costly time. Take a look at the following information to see if it could help you or someone you know!

**In the Image** assists children with getting new shoes. Go to <https://www.intheimage.org/s-h-o-e-s> to find a list of schools that participate and the dates you can pick up new shoes.

On Saturday, August 12, 2017 there will be backpack giveaways at the following locations:

11:00 am—2:00 pm at **Heartside** 359 Division Ave S Grand Rapids, MI 49503

2:00 pm—8:00 pm at **El Informador** 3575 Division Ave S Grand Rapids, MI 49548, use the 34<sup>th</sup> St mall parking lot.

Bring the Kids!

