



BACK-TO-SCHOOL

by Texas Attorney General Greg Abbott

THE START OF A NEW SCHOOL YEAR IS an exciting time! New teachers, classmates, books and supplies await a child on the first day of school. As Texas children head back to the classroom, it's a good time to remind parents of the importance of supporting their children both emotionally and financially.

It is common knowledge that children depend on their parents for basic needs like food, shelter, health care and back-to-school clothing. But, research shows that it's about more than just money for the necessities. 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.

Parents who pay child support are much more likely to take an active role in their kids' lives. 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 can lead to drug use and early pregnancy.

Thankfully, most parents pay their court-ordered child support every month. For parents who need extra encouragement, it is our hope that the new school year brings renewed commitment to do the right thing: pay their child support. All children deserve the security that comes with parents who care enough to make regular child support payments.

Parents who need child support services can contact the Child Support Division of the Attorney General's Office for assistance. The Child Support Division will help:

- Establish paternity;
- Locate a noncustodial parent;
- Establish and enforce child support and medical support orders;
- Review and adjust child support payments; and

- Collect and distribute child support payments.

The Attorney General's Office accepts applications from mothers, fathers and other individuals who need child support services. Customers can apply for services by calling the 24-hour voice response system at (800) 252-8014 or by visiting Child Support Interactive on the main Attorney General Web site at www.texasattorneygeneral.gov. Parents who receive financial assistance through the Texas Health and Human Services Commission automatically receive child support services.

For the state fiscal year that ended August 31, 2008, the Child Support Division collected more than \$2.6 billion in child support. The Office of the Attorney General is committed to Texas children, and we will work with parents to collect the support kids 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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- Locate a noncustodial parent
- Establish and enforce child support and medical support orders
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Apply for Child Support Services by

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Information on this and other topics is available on the Attorney General's Web site at www.texasattorneygeneral.gov



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