


**FAMILY LAW:**  
**What teens and young parents need to know**

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LOS ANGELES CENTER FOR  
LAW AND JUSTICE

Sharon Cartagena  
Beyond the Bench  
December 15, 2011



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**WHAT WE'LL COVER**

- What is Family Law?
- Emancipation
- Statutory Rape
- Restraining Orders
- Legal Rights of Young Parents



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**Some things before we start...**

**RULES**

Don't say something you don't want everyone to know!

Raise your hand

Respect what other people are saying



**POP QUIZ**

- Raise your hand
- Be the first to answer the question correctly
- Get candy

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# What is Family Law?

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EMANCIPATION

# POP QUIZ

BONUS

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**So you want to be emancipated?**

- How?
  - Go to Court.
  - Get married.
  - Join the army.
- What do you have to prove?
  - 14 or older
  - Have been living apart from your parents or guardians
  - Manage your own finances
  - Have your own source of income
- And then what happens...



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# RESTRAINING ORDERS

# POP QUIZ



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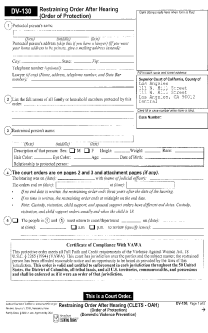
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## Not just a piece of paper.



A restraining order is a COURT ORDER!



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## Restraining Orders: What have you heard?



Don't you have to be 18 to get a Restraining Order?

What if we get back together? Won't I get in trouble then?

But how much does to cost to get a Restraining Order?

How do you apply for a Restraining Order?

If he's bothering me, I can just get a restraining order to make him stop. It's easy, right?

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STATUTORY RAPE

**POP QUIZ**

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**Statutory Rape**


It's illegal to have sex with someone who is under 18.

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**EVEN IF ...**

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- \*You are also under 18
- \*The person agrees to it
- \*Their parents are cool with it



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TEEN PARENTS

**POP QUIZ**

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**Who has the rights?**

Grandparents do not have rights or responsibilities to the baby.\*\*\*

GRANDPARENT

TEEN PARENT

BABY

The diagram consists of three overlapping circles. A large yellow circle on the left is labeled 'GRANDPARENT'. A light blue circle on the right is labeled 'TEEN PARENT'. A smaller dark teal circle is nested inside the 'TEEN PARENT' circle and labeled 'BABY'. The text 'Grandparents do not have rights or responsibilities to the baby.\*\*\*' is positioned above the 'TEEN PARENT' circle.

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TEEN MOM v. TEEN DAD

**POP QUIZ**

14

The slide features the text 'TEEN MOM v. TEEN DAD' in purple, underlined. Below it, 'POP QUIZ' is written in large, bold, yellow letters with a black outline. A small number '14' is in the bottom right corner.

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Teen mom and Teen dad have EXACT same rights

As long as they are both the **LEGAL PARENT**

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The slide has the text 'Teen mom and Teen dad have EXACT same rights' in purple, underlined. Below is a photograph of a young man and a young woman facing each other, with a yellow equals sign between them. At the bottom, it says 'As long as they are both the LEGAL PARENT' in black, bold text. A small number '15' is in the bottom right corner.

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## Who's the Legal Parent?



### LEGAL MOM



### LEGAL DAD

**Legal and biological are not the same thing!**

**Three ways to Become Legal Dad**

1. Married when child is born,
2. Both sign Voluntary Declaration of Paternity (at birth or any other time),
3. Go to Court.

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Are YOU the father?



# POP QUIZ

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## Deadline to Doubt...



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- Before baby turns 2
  - Mom or dad may challenge paternity and ask the Court for DNA tests

- After baby turns 2
  - It's too late even if DNA tests show he is not the bio dad!

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### Before and After Court

Teen parents have the **SAME RIGHTS** as any parent – even without a court order!

**BEFORE COURT**  
Teen parents work together to make decisions.

**RISING CONFLICT!! CAN'T WORK TOGETHER!!**

**AFTER COURT**  
The Judge decides – and no one is happy.

Go to Court because there is a problem. Don't go just because.

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### In Court, you have to ASK for what you want and explain WHY.

Visits

Custody

Child Support

What's best for baby?

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### EVIDENCE: The Court only knows what you tell it.

**Convincing**

- History of drugs, alcohol, or violence
- Baby health, safety, welfare
- Wanting child to have a relationship w/both parents

**Not so convincing**

- He cheated
- He wasn't around before so he shouldn't ever come back
- He doesn't take care of the baby the way I tell him to

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**LIGHTENING ROUND:  
TRUE OR FALSE.**



1. You can give up custody while you get yourself together – it's easy to get it back.
2. When he picks up the baby for a visit, you have to send the baby with diapers and wipes.
3. If I get sole custody, I can deny him visits.
4. Moms have more rights than dads.
5. If he's not paying support, he doesn't have the right to visit.
6. Moms never have to pay child support.

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**Teen/LA Project**



Who we serve: People ages 13-24 living in Los Angeles County.

What we do: Answer your legal questions, help you with paperwork, even represent you in Court.

(323) 980-3500

[www.laclj.org](http://www.laclj.org)

[www.facebook.com/TeenLA](http://www.facebook.com/TeenLA)

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**Not in LA?**



Check out **Teen/LA** Online Office hours. Starting soon.

See [www.facebook.com/TeenLA](http://www.facebook.com/TeenLA) for details.

Or these great sites...

[www.pregnantyouth.info](http://www.pregnantyouth.info)

[www.breakthecycle.org](http://www.breakthecycle.org)

[www.courts.ca.gov](http://www.courts.ca.gov)

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