



RESOURCE GUIDE FOR MOTHERS

At Barkus Law, we are committed to helping you find the resources you need for your family. Below is a list of resources that may be helpful to you. Please note that the following is for general information and not legal advice.

THINGS YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT PATERNITY

- **IF YOU ARE NOT MARRIED TO THE CHILD'S FATHER, YOU ARE THE CUSTODIAL PARENT-** Even if the father signed the child's birth certificate, paternity has not been established. Until you, the child's father, or another state court or agency establish paternity, the mother is considered the legal custodian of the child. For information about the ways to establish paternity, see our blog post: <http://barkuslaw.com/the-importance-of-establishing-paternity/>. Keep in mind that this does not mean you can make whatever decisions you want for yourself and the child.
- **IF YOU MOVE AWAY (RELOCATE) WITH THE CHILD, A JUDGE CAN ORDER THE CHILD TO RETURN-** Some attorneys give the questionable advice to mothers that they can just move away with the child and the father cannot stop it. This is incorrect. Even if paternity has not been established, a father may be able to take steps to prevent the mother from relocating with the child, or ordering the child to return if the mother moves away before establishing paternity.
- **YOU CAN'T "TAKE AWAY" TIMESHARING IF THE FATHER DOES NOT PAY CHILD SUPPORT-** Judges do not like it when a parent does not pay child support. But this is separate from timesharing. You cannot withhold a child from the other parent because child support is not paid. There are other remedies for non-payment of child support, but this is not permitted by the Court.
- **"SOLE" CUSTODY AND DECISION MAKING ARE RARE:** In most situations, parents will share decision making responsibility for their children. You may not like certain things the father does, or his family or new girlfriend, but these usually are not reasons a judge will use to deny a father the right to joint decision making.
- **ONCE PATERNITY IS ESTABLISHED, THERE IS NO PRIMARY PARENT-** Many mothers feel that a child should spend the majority of time with them, especially if the child is very young. The Courts take a different approach. There is no "primary parent" designation anymore. Although a judge will consider the child's schedule, and the needs of a baby, the law in Florida requires judges to allow both parents to spend time with their child. This is likely to include overnights with the other parent, even with a very small child.



SUPPORT GROUPS AND WORKSHOPS

Divorce and separation are difficult enough, and you should not go through this process alone. Sometimes, even the most well meaning friends and family cannot understand what you are going through, especially if you are fighting to see your child or unable to see your child. Support groups are a great way to connect with others in similar situations to provide much needed emotional and other support.

- **Divorce Care**

Divorce recovery support group where you can find help and healing for the hurt of separation and divorce.

www.divorcecare.org

- **The Family Healing Center of Broward County**

Services include: psychotherapy (Individual, couples and family); divorce counseling; parenting and co-parenting counseling; and educational workshops.

www.familyhealingbroward.com

- **Breakups and Divorce Support Group**

Online forum for women facing divorce.

<http://www.womansdivorce.com/florida.html>

Online forum for single mothers.

<https://single-moms.supportgroups.com/>

- **Single mom's support in Florida: A guide providing tips, resources and assistance for single mothers in Florida.**

<http://www.singlemom.com/florida-assistance/>

Did you know: Over 40% of children in the United States are born to unmarried parents? And Florida is #3 in the nation for highest # of births to unmarried parents.



PARENT COORDINATORS

Co-parenting can be challenging even when you are together. Many people don't see eye to eye on how to raise their child, or they have trouble communicating with each other. Parent coordinators can be helpful in teaching you how to work together and communicate for your child's sake.

- Brad Zucker LHMC
1881 NE 26th St, Suite 70
Wilton Manors, Florida 33305
[\(954\) 357-2678](tel:9543572678)
- Tammy Berman MS
Florida Qualified Parenting Coordinator
817 S. University Drive, Suite # 121
Plantation, FL 33324
(954) 839-0106

CO-PARENTING RESOURCES

All parents who are divorced or in paternity cases, must take a 4 hour parenting course. These courses are offered in person or online. The following is a list of online parenting courses. Please check and make sure the Judge in your case approves your taking an online parenting course.

<http://www.floridacoparenting.com/>
<http://positiveparentingclassesforflorida.com/>
<http://www.floridaparenting.com/>





RESOURCES FOR FIRST TIME PARENTS





Did you know: Motor vehicle crashes are the leading cause of injury to small children? And, 3 out of 4 car seats are installed improperly.

Infant and child CPR- Accredited, licensed and insured in teaching infant and child CPR and Heimlich maneuver for choking.

<http://www.cprflorida.net/newparentinfantchildcpr.html>

Car seats purchase and installation - Teaches you the correct way to install car seats. You can also purchase car seats for discounted prices.

<https://www.baptistjax.com/patient-info/classes-and-events/car-seat-workshop>

USE THE APPROPRIATE SAFETY SEAT	
	REAR-FACING SEATS from birth until age 2, or until your child reaches the upper weight limit of their rear-facing convertible seat, which will be around 35 pounds.
	FORWARD-FACING SEATS once your child reaches the upper weight or height limit of their rear-facing convertible seat. It is safest to keep your child in a forward-facing seat with a harness until they reach the maximum weight limit (40 - 65 pounds) or height restriction of their seat.
	BELT-POSITIONING BOOSTER SEATS once a child outgrows the upper weight or height limit of their forward-facing harness. Children should use belt-positioning booster seats until they are at least 4'9" and are between 8 and 12 years of age.
	LAP & SHOULDER BELTS once the belt fits properly. All children under age 13 should ride in the back seat!
INSTALL THE SAFETY SEAT CORRECTLY Car seats are most effective when used properly. Make sure you read the installation instructions correctly. There are certified child safety seat technicians who can help. Contact 1-866-SEAT-CHECK for additional information.	

To locate a certified car seat technician:

<http://safeseats4kids.aaa.com/car-seat-guide/>



ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Books for first time parents

[http://www.goodreads.com/list/show/7796.Must Reads for First Time Parents](http://www.goodreads.com/list/show/7796.Must_Reads_for_First_Time_Parents)

Websites for first time parents

<http://redtri.com/bump-baby/best-websites-for-new-and-expecting-parents/>

10 mistakes new parents make by WebMD

<http://www.webmd.com/parenting/baby/features/10-mistakes-new-parents-make#1>

Checklist- essentials for a new baby- The bare-bones, absolute essentials, nothing-but-the-basics guide to what to buy for baby.

<http://www.thebump.com/a/checklist-baby-essentials>

Recommended reading for single mothers

[http://singlemoms.org/ify/recommended reading.htm](http://singlemoms.org/ify/recommended_reading.htm)