

Analysis of the deadbeat dad policies and the situation in new jersey

[Family](#), [Children](#)



Children are the purest gifts of nature. Their minds are like blank papers. They are not just small people. They are developmentally different from adults and therefore deserve specialized treatment. Children need to be supplied with the tools for learning and proper development. They deserve the right to be provided with adequate support for upbringing and nourishment. But all parents do not realize that. In our society, there are children who are born out of wedlock. More than half of the marriages as well, end up in divorce.

Consequently, a large number of children are forced to either live with single parent or with adopted parent or even without parental care at all. The government thus had to regulate the issue thereby forcing the legal parents to support their children. However that is not happening much of the time in today's world. Nearly 15 million fathers in the United States do not live with their children. After a divorce, the children usually stay with mothers. Fathers are socially cut off from the family but they are still bound to bear the expenses incurred on the children.

It is however estimated that two third of these fathers do not pay the formal child support. Society is rightly concerned about the widespread failure of absent fathers to contribute to their children's support. And a variety of recent policy initiatives are strengthening the enforcement tools necessary to ensure that "deadbeat dads" are identified and required to fulfil their child support responsibilities (Corsi 107). This essay will analyze the concept of deadbeat dads, and will evaluate the situation related to this aspect in New Jersey.

The paper will first describe the welfare reforms and child support, followed by explanation of the term ' deadbeat dads. ' The paper will also explore the policy and law on this aspect, how to find the deadbeat dads, and few alternatives before scrutinizing the situation in New Jersey. Welfare Reforms and Child Support From the ethical as well as legal perspectives, every child is entitled to support from his parents. All parents, whether natural or adoptive, have a financial obligation to support their child. This mandatory legal binding continues even if the parents have divorced.

The requirement is same in the cases of unmarried parents. There can however be circumstances where parents are committed to each other and to their child but they are faced with various problems for creating and maintaining a stable family structure due to low education and job skills, lack of jobs, and poor relationship skills (Elaine 86-89). In such case the government is responsible to provide all necessary assistance and encourage family values and social responsibilities. On the other hand, there may be scenarios where parents are divorced or unwilling to take care of their child.

While considering the custody of a child, the important aspect to be kept in mind should be the best interest of the child (Smith 55). Every child deserves to be provided with somewhat close to the ideal environments. It is not a child's fault to have opened eyes in a poor setup. The law abides the parents and the government responsible for ensuring provision of equal opportunities to all children. Parents who try to diverge from their responsibility of child care are liable to be brought before justice (Laura 1-12).

Deadbeat Dads - Concept and Reality The term 'deadbeat dad' refers to the men who have fathered a child but fail to pay the amount of child support. This amount is calculated by the relevant government agency which is either paid to the mother or to the state who incurs the expenses for the child support. In such cases these men are nominated by the mother as the father of her child. The government then presses these men to pay for their child's support, failing which they are put behind bars or they keep running from the law (Walker 18).

The government then becomes responsible for compensating the mother. It has been found that there are very less number of fathers who opt 'not to pay' for their children, if they can do so. The majority of men in child support arrears are typically unemployed or low income while saddled with unrealistic court ordered payment amounts (Rogers 210). Research reveals that the term 'deadbeat dads' has been used in reference to fathers who are neglecting their role to act as a parent or bread winner.

These men may reside with their children or be separated through divorce or otherwise, with children in the care of their mother (Sanford 29). Deadbeat dads are sometimes confused with Turnips, who are ex-spouses who can not afford to pay child support. One example of a turnip is a father who is in prison; he is obviously not making money while he is on the inside. Now an example of a deadbeat dad is when the father is enjoying all the finer things in life and he cannot reach far enough into his pocket to make sure that his children are taken care of.

Or an other example of a deadbeat dad is a father who is unemployed or is not making enough money to support a child (Bergo 14-15). There are people who argue that the term ‘ deadbeat dads’ is often used and misused to cover up the inadequacies and inefficiency of the government to eradicate poverty from the society. If people are employed and living a better life, then the question of not paying for the child support does not exist. Since the statistics provide sufficient evidence that most of the ‘ deadbeat dads’ are the men who simply can not support their children.

Although it is the parents responsibility to take good care of their children but it is definitely the government’s responsibility to take good care of the parents by providing them sufficient resources to meet their minimum requirements. But then there are deadbeat dads and deadbeat moms who are irresponsible and are unwilling to perform their role as parents. Deadbeat Dads - Policy and Law Child support laws date back to last quarter of 20th century. It was in 1975, when the Congress passed the Child Support Enforcement Program. This program aimed at making it mandatory for both the parents to pay for their children.

The laws and regulations have continued since then. The Bradley Amendment was passed in 1986 to automatically trigger a non expiring lien whenever child support becomes past-due. The child support law after the Bradley Amendment requires that the payment amounts be maintained without regard for the physical capability of the person owing child support (the obligor) to make the notification or regard for their awareness of the need to make the notification (Smith 23-27). The amendment was intended

to correct a perceived imbalance between the power of the obligee and the obligor during subsequent child support disputes.

These amendments have remained controversial since their incorporation in the child support law. Discussions still continue to make it better. Finding Deadbeat Dads In United States, it is not so easy to run from law. Technological advancements and inter-networking of various federal and state agencies makes it convenient for law enforcers to trace out the culprits. With regard to the implementation of laws related to deadbeat parents, federal, state and local governments are all playing an active part.

The federal government has laid down the standards for child support enforcement and the state governments are actively pursuing the same. The local governments make all out efforts in locating the deadbeat parents, establishing paternity, enforcement of child support, and modification of support. The search process begins as soon as the non implementation of child support report is filed. State and local governments are employing a number of ways in locating the defaulters of child support order. Social security numbers are used to search jobs, bank accounts, automobiles, and tax returns.

Deadbeat parents also can now be tracked down from state to state since federal and state regulations of child support have been established. The federal government has also mandated that a country wide automated child tracking system be implemented. This new system is known as Bureau of Support Enforcement Tracking System (SETS). This automated system keeps track of non-paying parents, their addresses, employment, social security

numbers, and any other information used in helping to locate deadbeat parents. Alternative Approaches The prime responsibility for child support rests with the parents.

Government can assist in implementation of law if parents fail to do so. Deadbeat parents is an effective system of child support enforcement nationwide. It is a systematic effort to establish paternity for every child. Its most suitable alternative is to avoid circumstances that lead a parent to abandon his/her child. Society should be strong enough to inculcate values, motivation and discipline in parents. Society needs to educate people that children should not have children. The government has to make it convenient for parents to build strong families through pay equity.

Family and medical leave will ensure that workers don't have to choose between family and work. There should be a family preservation program to reduce child and spousal abuse by providing preventive services and foster care to families in crisis. Such program may include community based care, funding of education and vocational training, public and private partnership job training and placement programs, with employer incentives to hire trainees. There can be a lot of other alternatives to avoid a situation which can lead a parent to be declared as deadbeat.

There should be residential schools, free national health insurance, on-the-job day-care, with incentives for small businesses, as well as large corporations to participate, and work-at-home incentives etc. These are some of the necessary elements to providing a real alternative to the current system of child care (Glenda 6). Situation in New Jersey To implement the

federal law of child support, each state has its own set of child support guidelines and implementation priorities. Situation in New Jersey is no different than rest of the country.

There is no shortage of "deadbeat dads" and "deadbeat moms" but New Jersey has some of the strictest and highest child support awards in the United States. The life of defaulters of child support is not much easy here. The child support awards are much lower in many other states. It is very common that many "deadbeat dads or moms" deliberately move out of New Jersey to try to avoid child support. The present advances in information technology has made it possible to track down such 'deadbeat parents' and bring them to justice ("New Jersey Child Support," pars. 4-9).

Conclusion

A child's growth may be dependent on genetic factors to a large extent, but environment plays an equal role too. Every child is full of promise and potential. It is the environment we provide that helps the child reach to that potential. Provision of a suitable environment to a child is the responsibility of parents. If parents are not playing their part, the government steps in and ensures the implementation of law. The purpose of this paper was to give some insight into the deadbeat dad concept, relevant laws, finding these people and discuss alternative approaches.