

A Child's Right to Parental Identity

Peninsula Community Legal Centre recognises the importance in promoting and protecting the rights of children and provides assistance in relation to paternity testing to identify a child's father.

Victoria Mullings, Principal Lawyer says, "It is a right of a child to know who their parents are and it is something that most of us take for granted. The Child Support Program at Peninsula Community Legal Centre has assisted hundreds of mothers over the last 10 years to prove the identity of the father of their child.

"DNA testing is currently the most advanced and accurate technology to determine parentage. In a DNA parentage test, the result, which is called the 'probability of parentage', is 0% when the alleged parent is not biologically related to the child and typically greater than 99.9% when the alleged parent is biologically related to the child.

"Simply knowing who both their parents are can make a huge difference in the lives of children, as well as ensuring that children are financially provided for by both parents."

The right of a child to know their parentage is recognised at international law, in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, which commenced in 1989.

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child represents a major milestone in the historic effort to achieve a better world for children. As a binding treaty of international law, it codifies principles that countries of the United Nations agreed to be universal – for all children, in all countries and cultures, at all times and without exception, simply through the fact of their being born into the human family.

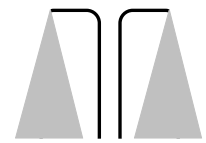
The treaty has amongst other things inspired changes in laws to better protect children and has been incorporated into family law legislation in Australia to reflect decision making concerning the best interests of children and the rights of the child. This treaty has achieved near-universal acceptance, having now been ratified by 193 parties, which is more than the number of nations who belong to the United Nations or that have signed up to the Geneva Conventions!

Peninsula Community Legal Centre operates a child support program to assist parents on a range of issues. For more information about free legal services, contact Peninsula Community Legal Centre on 9783 3600 or visit www.pclc.org.au.

ENDS.

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