

## "Babies Having Babies"

At the July 23, 2011 meeting of the Workgroup, someone raised the issue of whether the parents of teen parents would/should have to pay child support. Chair Stillman said that staff would provide the statutes relevant to this topic. Here are two statutes from [Chapter 13.34 RCW](#), the Juvenile court act, which deals with dependency and termination of the parent-child relationship.

### [RCW 13.34.160](#)

Order of support for dependent child.

(1) In an action brought under this chapter, the court may inquire into the ability of the parent or parents of the child to pay child support and may enter an order of child support as set forth in chapter 26.19 RCW. The court may enforce the same by execution, or in any way in which a court of equity may enforce its decrees. All child support orders entered pursuant to this chapter shall be in compliance with the provisions of RCW 26.23.050.

(2) For purposes of this section, if a dependent child's parent is an unmarried minor parent or pregnant minor applicant, then the parent or parents of the minor shall also be deemed a parent or parents of the dependent child. However, liability for child support under this subsection only exists if the parent or parents of the unmarried minor parent or pregnant minor applicant are provided the opportunity for a hearing on their ability to provide support. Any child support order requiring such a parent or parents to provide support for the minor parent's child may be effective only until the minor parent reaches eighteen years of age.

(3) In the absence of a court order setting support, the department may establish an administrative order for support upon receipt of a referral or application for support enforcement services.

### [RCW 13.34.161](#)

Order of support for dependent child — Noncompliance — Enforcement of judgment.

In any case in which the court has ordered a parent or parents, guardian, or other person having custody of a child to pay support under RCW 13.34.160 and the order has not been complied with, the court may, upon such person or persons being duly summoned or voluntarily appearing, proceed to inquire into the amount due upon the order and enter judgment for that amount against the defaulting party or parties, and the judgment shall be docketed as are other judgments for the payment of money.

In such judgments, the county in which the order is entered shall be the judgment creditor, or the state may be the judgment creditor where the child is in the custody of a state agency. Judgments may be enforced by the prosecuting attorney of the county, or the attorney general where the state is the judgment creditor and any moneys recovered shall be paid into the registry of the juvenile court and shall be disbursed to such person, persons, agency, or governmental department as the court finds is entitled to it.

Such judgments shall remain valid and enforceable for a period of ten years after the date of entry.