

WHAT IF? GAME SITUATIONS

INSTRUCTIONS *Divide the group into teams. Take turns having each team explain from a child's viewpoint what happens if the father has established legal paternity for his child.*

- 1** Your father is employed and has great health insurance. You discover that you need a major operation, and your mother does not have health insurance.

Answer: If he has established paternity, you can be covered by his health insurance.

- 2** You live with your mother, who develops a serious illness. You have no family other than your father. The state wants to place you in foster care, unless a legal guardian or parent can raise you.

Answer: If your father has established paternity, you can live with him. Otherwise, you will go into foster care. If he hasn't established paternity, he can take steps to become your legal father, but it will take time.

- 3** Your father is killed in an automobile accident. He has a \$200,000 life insurance policy.

Answer: If no beneficiary is named, funds go into his estate. If he is your legal father, you get a share of the estate.

- 4** Your father has two children from a previous marriage. He has life insurance and property. He dies suddenly from a heart attack.

Answer: If he is your legal father, you have a legal right to a share of his estate. Because he was married when his first two children were born, he is their legal father. They will get a share of his estate.

- 5** You are a gifted athlete and your coaches think you can become a professional. However, you need a lot of financial support from both of your parents to pursue your dream.

Answer: If your father has established paternity, you are in a good position to have him actively involved in your life and supporting your dreams. There are no guarantees, but the chances are better than if he had not established paternity.

WHAT IF? GAME SITUATIONS *Continued*

- 6** Your mother and father do not get along. Your father has struggled to be a part of your life.

Answer: If your father did establish paternity, he can ask the family court to enforce a court order allowing him to see you on a regular basis. If he is not your legal father, he very likely will end up spending less and less time with you.

- 7** Your father's parents have money and resources, and they do a lot with and for their grandchildren.

Answer: This situation can vary. If your father established paternity, his parents are quite likely to recognize you as their grandchild and treat you accordingly. If he did not establish paternity, sometimes it will depend on the grandparents. If there is no legal connection, they may or may not have an emotional connection. When the grandparents die, you will have no legal connection to them or their estate, if your father did not establish paternity.

- 8** Your father was disabled and receiving Social Security disability. He died after a long illness.

Answer: If he is your legal father, you will begin receiving a Social Security check every month and will continue to receive those benefits until you turn 18. If he is not your legal father, you will receive none of his benefits.