

Handling Parents who Frustrate Phone Access

Question: I have a court order that allows me to call my eight year old son at 7 p.m. every other evening. Every time I call, his mother picks up the phone and says something like: "Oh it's the stupid bastard." She then either hangs up or if she lets me talk to Joey for a minute or two, always listens in on our talk, and hangs up before we can finish. I always pay our support on time. I'm not a "deadbeat dad." What do I do?

Answer: Plug your phone into a tape recorder. Go to any store that sells the kind of device that allows you to bug your own phone, like Radio Shack. SO long as you are taping your own phone conversations its perfectly legal and you don't have to tell the person who you are calling. Then after a few choice recordings of her rudeness are taped, have your lawyer send a copy of the tape and a transcript. Her lawyer should remind her that unless she follows the court's order, she could be found in contempt of court and will have to pay the court costs for interfering in your rights of access. Before each call identify the time and date of each conversation. It's amazing how quickly your conversations with your son will magically improve.