

A NEWSLETTER FROM

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Family Matters

Your Ex isn't Letting You See Your Children: What's Next?

*It's your scheduled time with the children.
You arrive to pick them up. Their other parent
tells you they can't make it. They are sick,
out with friends, at a school event, visiting
grandparents, or unwilling to see you.
You are tired of the long line of
phony excuses.*

What can you do to get your
children's other parent to let you
have your time with them?

If You Do Not Have a Court Order, Get One

If you and your children's other parent
are separated but not divorced or were



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never married, a court may not have entered a custody and visitation order. Absent a court order, there is little you can do to force the other parent to allow you to see your children. Your first step is to go to court and obtain an order. You can hire an attorney to prepare the papers and represent you in court. If you can't afford an attorney, some courts have a family law facilitator's office that will help you prepare a petition for custody and visitation free of charge.

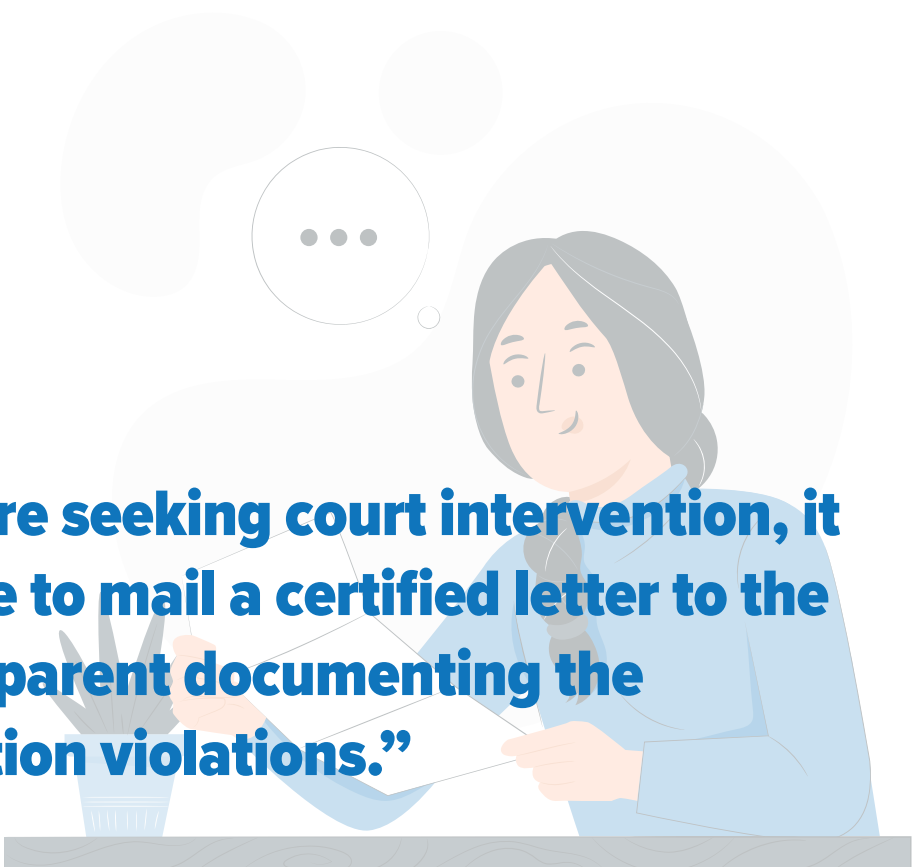
Let the court know in your petition and testimony about the other parent's history of keeping your children from you. The other parent's uncooperative behavior could persuade the court to designate you as the primary custodial parent.

Once You Have the Order, Lay the Groundwork for Enforcing It

Try alternatives to court intervention first. Court is expensive, stressful, and risky. Alternative strategies that you can try to remedy the situation outside of court include:

- Expressing your concerns to the other parent in a safe environment outside the children's presence. A conversation with your children's other parent may be worth the effort if you believe it will not degenerate into an argument.
- Attending counseling sessions together with a therapist to resolve lingering emotional issues. Counseling may be a place to start if anger or other negative emotions get in the way when you and your children's





“Before seeking court intervention, it is wise to mail a certified letter to the other parent documenting the visitation violations.”

other parent try to communicate.

- Hiring a mediator to help you achieve a mutually agreeable compromise. A mediator might be most helpful if either or both of you would like to renegotiate the timesharing schedule.

Even if these alternative strategies are ineffective and you must go to court, the court will be favorably impressed with your efforts.

Keep a visitation log.

Whether visitation is going

smoothly or not, you should keep a visitation log. In the log, document the dates and times that you have the children and what occurs during your time with them. If your children’s other parent is refusing to let the children see you or making other efforts to undermine your relationship with them, you can use the log as evidence. The log enables you to report to the court with specificity the problems you have experienced because of the other parent’s violation of the court order.

Send the other parent written notice of violations.

Before seeking court intervention, it is wise to mail a certified letter to the other parent documenting the visitation violations. Each time visitation is violated, send a written notice. These notices can be introduced into evidence at a hearing to enforce the court’s custody and visitation order. Your attorney can write a demand letter to the other parent outlining how he or she is in contempt of court and

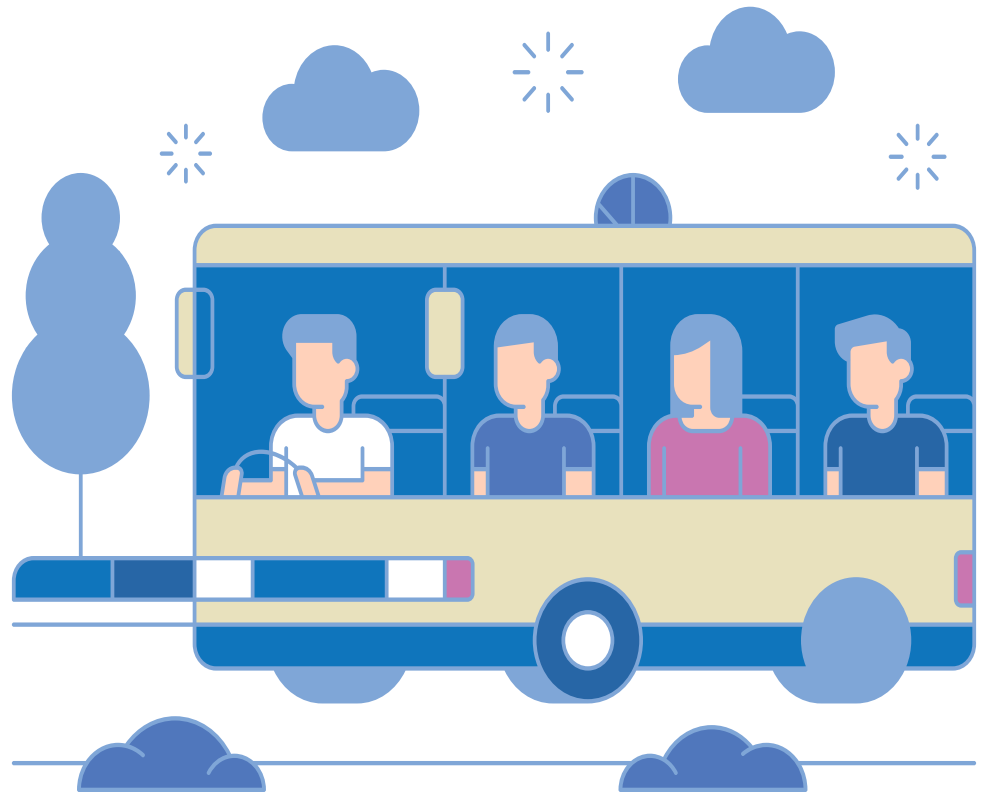
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Keeping Kids Safe When Driving to School

If your child is taking the bus or riding in a car to school, you will have peace of mind knowing they are safe. One way to do so is to share these travel tips from the American Red Cross, the National Safety Council, and the American Academy of Pediatrics.

If your child will be riding the bus

- If your child has a medical problem that could result in an emergency on the bus, talk to the school nurse or other school health personnel to develop a bus emergency plan.
- Make sure your child knows where to wait for the bus.
- Review these bus safety rules with your child and make sure she understands the importance of following them:
 - Stay out of the street while waiting for the bus.
 - Stay on the sidewalk away from the curb as the bus pulls up.
 - Wait for the bus to come to a complete stop before approaching it.
 - Board the bus when the driver or attendant tells you to get on.
 - If the bus has seat belts, put them on.
 - Stay seated while the bus is moving.
 - Keep heads and arms inside the bus.
 - Obey the driver and/or attendant.
 - Do not get out of your seat until the bus comes to a complete stop.
 - Leave from the front and use the handrail to prevent falls.
 - If you need to cross the street after getting off the bus, cross in front of the bus where the driver can see you.



- Cross the street at least 10 feet (or 10 giant steps) in front of the bus.
- Never bend down in front of the bus to tie your shoes or pick something up; the driver may not see you before moving.
- Always stay in clear view of the bus driver and never walk behind the bus.

If you will be driving your child

- Drop your child off and pick her up as close to the school as possible.
- Don't drive away until she is inside the schoolyard or

building.

- Make sure your child knows exactly where you'll be picking her up.
- Make sure your child and any other children you drive are safely restrained:
 - Your child should ride in a car safety seat with a harness until (a) she has reached the top weight or height allowed for her seat, (b) her shoulders are above the top harness slots, or (c) her ears have reached the top of the seat.
 - Your child should ride

in a booster seat using your vehicle's lap and shoulder restraints until your vehicle's restraints fit him properly (usually when he is about 4' 9" in height and between 8 to 12 years old).

- Your child is ready to ride without a booster when he can sit against the seat back with his legs bent at the knees; the shoulder belt lies across the middle of his chest (not his neck); and the lap belt is snug across his thighs (not his stomach).
 - Children should ride in the back seat at least until age 13.
- If a child must ride in the front because you are driving more children than fit in your back seat, move the passenger seat as far away from the dashboard as possible. 📖

Illustrations by Designs.ai





Quirky August Holidays

The Fourth of July has passed, it's not quite Labor Day, and you may still be looking for an excuse to celebrate. While it may be the forgotten middle child of summer, here are some weird and interesting holidays to mark on your August calendar:

August 3 - National Mustard Day

Sandwiched (no pun intended) between the two greatest barbecue holidays of the year, National Mustard Day is strategically situated where it's needed the most.

August 4 - National Psychic Day

Time to test your ESP skills—we predict they may or may not work.

August 7 - International Beer Day

Grab a bottle (or a barrel) of your favorite beer and enjoy a toast to this worldwide event.

August 9 - National Book Lovers Day

Kick back with your favorite book, whether it's mystery, romance, or nonfiction, and enjoy a glass of all that beer you may (or may not) have left over from International Beer Day!

August 18 - National Bad Poetry Day

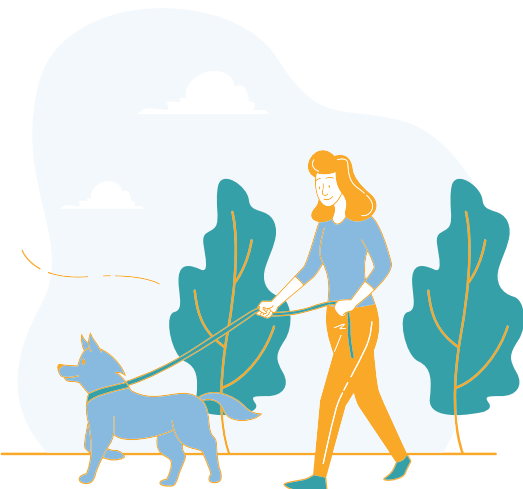
Send a funny greeting card to a friend, or try your hand at writing a sonnet or limerick—just know that you can't fail on this day!

August 21 - National Senior Citizens Day

This holiday is a great excuse to celebrate loved ones outside of their birthdays and show how much you care.

August 26 - National Dog Day

Whether you have a dog or just spend way too much time looking at pictures of cute dogs on the internet, this is the perfect day to celebrate our furry best friends. 📌



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requesting the parent to promptly correct the violation. Sometimes, a demand letter is all that is required to get the other parent to cooperate.

Don't run to court with trivial infractions.

Although courts expect parents to follow custody and visitation orders, they are not eager to referee petty disputes or deal with inconsequential violations (e.g., a single

instance of missed visitation, or a parent who is chronically 15 minutes late dropping off or picking up the children). Courts expect both parents to act reasonably. Rushing to court with a minor infraction that does not harm your children or damage their relationship with you can backfire. Some minor aggravations you just need to learn to live with. 📌

Illustrations by Storyset

Confit Tomatoes

With Torn And Toasted Dipping Bread

Prep 10 mins | Cook 1 hour, 30 mins | Total 1 hour, 40 mins | Yield 4-8 servings

INGREDIENTS

For the confit:

- 6 cups of cherry tomatoes
- 6 - 12 garlic cloves, peeled and lightly smashed
- Several sprigs fresh herbs (rosemary, thyme, oregano or a mixture of herbs)
- 3/4 cup first press, extra virgin olive oil
- 1 generous pinch crushed red pepper
- 2 pinches kosher salt
- Fresh ground pepper to taste

FOR THE TORN, TOASTED BREAD:

- 1 loaf ciabatta bread
- Olive oil
- 1 pinch of kosher salt

OPTIONAL ADDITIONS:

Add goat or feta cheese to the platter or mix chunks directly into the confit before serving.



INSTRUCTIONS

For the confit:

Heat oven to 275 degrees F. Put tomatoes in a single layer in a baking dish. Tuck garlic and herbs around the tomatoes. Pour olive oil over the tomatoes, garlic and herbs. Season with crushed red pepper, kosher salt and pepper.

Bake for about 1.5 hours until tomatoes just begin to burst. Remove from the oven and

set aside. May be done several days to 2 weeks in advance and stored in an airtight container in the fridge. When ready to use, remove from the fridge and allow to come to room temperature.

For the torn, toasted bread:

Heat the oven to 350 degrees. Tear the ciabatta loaf into 2 - 3" pieces. About 10 minutes before the tomatoes are done, place the bread pieces in a sheet pan and drizzle with olive oil and season with salt. Watching closely, bake in the oven about 10 minutes until the edges begin to brown and crisp. Remove from the oven and serve immediately.

To serve:

Place the confit in a dish on a cheese board and surround with the crispy torn bread. Serve with the confit and toast with a nice cool glass of Sancerre or Sauvignon Blanc. 🍷