

TONS of USEFUL STUFF

JUNE 1995

Men's Health

**Add Muscle
Shed Flab**

Peak Sex

10 Undercover Secrets

Simplify Your Life

**101 Instant Fixes For
Your Biggest Hassles**

3 STEPS TO POWERFUL LEGS

**STOP WORRYING
ABOUT YOUR HEART**

**THE ADVICE
DAD NEVER GAVE YOU**

Best-New Sports Gear
Our Exclusive 16-Page Guide

DISPLAY UNTIL JUNE 21

\$2.95 Printed in USA



Deadbeat dad. The term evokes images of selfish, Porsche-driving middle-aged guys tooling around the country buying drinks for college girls while their wan and winsome children suffer in Dickensian privation. No wonder President Clinton wants to get tough on fathers who don't pay court-ordered child support. According to the administration's figures, cracking down on these scoundrels, by garnishing their wages and taking away their driver's licenses, would bring in an additional \$24 billion in child support payments and move 800,000 mothers and children off the welfare rolls. ❑ Only one problem: Some of this is just plain hooey. A significant number of those men listed as deadbeat dads don't pay support because they can't, they're in



Custody's Last Stand

prison, says Richard Warshak, Ph.D., an expert on custody issues and author of *The Custody Revolution*. Another good reason: **Some so-called deadbeats don't pay support because they are, indeed, dead.** ❑ Exaggerating figures to get a point across is stan-

dard political procedure. But in doing so here, a valuable point gets buried. That is, the best way to get men to pay child support isn't to attach their wages or take away their wheels. **The best way to get men to pay child support is to let them spend time with their kids.** According to a 1992 Census Bureau survey, 90 percent of men who have joint custody of their children pay child support in full. Those who are denied custody, but have access to their kids, pay up at a rate approaching 80 percent. But when men aren't given custody or visitation rights, the rate falls to 44 percent. Looks like a simple problem with a simple solution, no? ❑ No. Our legal system is set up to view fathers as nothing more than walking wallets. In most cases, the ex-wife controls the kids, controls the money and controls when and if the father gets to see his children. She can deny him his children at any time. Even when courts order the woman to provide visitation for the father, there's rarely any enforcement of the ruling if she refuses. There's not much the man can do about it, except make the mistake of withholding payments out of frustration. ❑ Fortunately, some in the Clinton administration are wising up to the facts. As we go to press, the U.S. Commission on Child and Family Welfare is holding hearings on how courts, lawmakers and communities can improve the legal system so it works for, not against, the best interests of our children. With luck, their report will demonstrate once and for all how important an influence men are in the lives of their kids. ❑ And a father's influence doesn't end when his children hit 18. **Any man who's lost his father knows what a void that can leave in his life,** what an important source of wisdom and advice has been taken from him. We sent Senior Writer Joe Kita to search out some of that wisdom from men in their 60s, 70s, 80s and beyond, men who have seen enough of the world to have gained the fatherly wisdom we all need. Take their advice, beginning on page 86.

Michael Lafavore
Executive Editor