

I am a father and my son and I are both victims of Misattribution of Paternity here in Western Australia. This is my story.

I was 21 years old at the time. Working and earning big money as an unskilled, unqualified trade assistant up in the Pilbara of Western Australia during mid 2010. To earn that kind of money at that age, looking back now was always going to be a bit of a recipe for disaster. I spent my cash as quickly as I earned it. Boys trips, boys toys, pub crawls and a lot of girls became the norm for 3 solid years. After 3 years of what I thought was living my best life, I realised it wasn't so sustainable and I could see the economy in the Pilbara was slowing down. I decided for my own health, I really needed to get out of there and change my ways. I sold my toys and used my little funds left over to move to Perth and begin a 4 year electrical apprenticeship. After I completed my apprenticeship I returned to the Pilbara on a FIFO basis only, still earning big money now I was qualified, but not allowing myself to be there long enough to spend my cash. I saved and bought my first home not long after. I worked hard and saved hard and paid off my house in a few years. During this time, I met and fell in love with a beautiful lady, we decided to get married after 12 months of being together, we knew we had found our soul mates and didn't want to waste any time in building our lives together. We had our whole lives and future mapped out together. 6 months after we were married, I received a random message request to my Facebook messenger inbox. I opened it up and it still haunts me now what I read. I won't go in to the exact details but the message stated I had fathered a little boy all those years ago whilst living and working up in the Pilbara. My son's mother chose at the time not to say anything to me as she could see I was pretty unstable with my partying lifestyle and instead moved back over east to her parents and got on with life raising our little boy as a single mother. My son was born early 2013 and I have only just recently found out I have a son. It was a hard pill to swallow at first, and one I didn't want to put much thought into until a legal DNA paternity test was done. It's still pretty raw now, with so many mixed emotions. I have a lot of missed time to make up for and my entire life plans and future with my wife has now all of a sudden been turned upside down. This has placed a massive strain on our marriage as we both ride the highs and the lows that are associated with misattribution of paternity. This issue affects so many more people than just me. We are slowly working towards building a father and son relationship now and integrating him into our lives. His mum made the choice for me to not become a father and has now made the choice for me to become a father. Unbeknownst to me, she had followed me on Facebook for some time and could see I was now happy and stable, and she felt it was the right time for her son to now get to know who his father was.