

1 AN ACT in relation to parenting.

2 Be it enacted by the People of the State of Illinois,
3 represented in the General Assembly:

4 Section 1. Short title. This Act may be cited as the
5 Council on Responsible Fatherhood Act.

6 Section 5. Purpose. The purpose of this Act is to
7 promote the recognition of the importance of the
8 participation of both parents in the lives of their children.
9 While social policy and practice have often focused on the
10 difficulties of raising a child in a single-parent family and
11 have often created barriers to the involvement of both
12 parents in their child's life, the purpose of this Act is to
13 promote a social policy and practice that values the
14 contribution that each parent brings to the family unit.

15 Section 10. Fatherhood initiative.

16 (a) The purpose of this Act shall be implemented through
17 a fatherhood initiative to be directed by the Council on
18 Responsible Fatherhood created by this Act.

19 (b) The goals of the fatherhood initiative are to
20 increase the awareness of the problems created when a child
21 grows up without the presence of a responsible father; to
22 identify obstacles that impede or prevent the involvement of
23 responsible fathers in the lives of their children; to
24 identify strategies that are successful in overcoming
25 identified obstacles and in encouraging responsible
26 fatherhood; and to facilitate the transition from current
27 policies, perceptions, and practices that adversely affect
28 the participation of fathers in their children's lives to
29 policies, perceptions, and practices that promote the
30 contributions of responsible fathers. The fatherhood

1 initiative must promote positive interaction between fathers
2 and their children. While the emphasis of the program must
3 be on the population of children whose families have received
4 or are receiving public assistance, the program may not
5 exclude other populations of children for which the program
6 is appropriate.

7 (b) The fatherhood initiative must include, but is not
8 limited to, the following:

9 (1) The promotion of public education concerning
10 the financial and emotional responsibilities of
11 fatherhood.

12 (2) The provision of assistance to men in preparing
13 for the legal, financial, and emotional responsibilities
14 of fatherhood.

15 (3) The promotion of the establishment of paternity
16 upon the birth of a child.

17 (4) The encouragement of fathers in fostering an
18 emotional connection to children and providing financial
19 support to children.

20 (5) The establishment of support mechanisms for
21 fathers developing and maintaining relationships with
22 their children.

23 (6) The identification and promotion of methods
24 that reduce the negative outcomes experienced by children
25 affected by divorce, separation, and disputes concerning
26 custody and visitation.

27 (7) The integration of State and local services
28 available to families.

29 Section 15. Council on Responsible Fatherhood.

30 (a) The Council on Responsible Fatherhood is created to
31 carry out the purposes, goals, and initiatives of this Act.
32 The Council consists of 21 members appointed by and serving
33 at the pleasure of the Governor. Members appointed by the

1 Governor must be chosen on the basis of their interest in and
2 experience with children and families. In addition, the
3 Speaker of the House of Representative, the Minority Leader
4 of the House of Representatives, the President of the Senate,
5 and the Minority Leader of the Senate shall each appoint one
6 ex officio, non-voting member. The Governor must choose one
7 member of the Council to be the Chairperson. A majority of
8 the members appointed by the Governor constitutes a quorum.
9 Members shall serve without compensation, but may be
10 reimbursed for their actual expenses in carrying out their
11 duties as members of the Council. The Department of Human
12 Services must provide staff support to the Council.

13 (b) The Council has the following duties:

14 (1) To develop a comprehensive plan that promotes
15 the positive involvement of fathers in their children's
16 lives.

17 (2) To evaluate State programs, government
18 policies, and community initiatives related to fatherhood
19 and to make recommendations regarding those programs,
20 policies, and initiatives to the Governor and the General
21 Assembly.

22 (3) To convene a statewide symposium in order to
23 discuss and resolve issues related to responsible
24 fatherhood and the importance of the participation of
25 both parents in their children's lives.

26 (4) Subject to appropriation, to develop criteria
27 for and to issue requests for proposals for grants for
28 responsible fatherhood projects that are approved by the
29 Council.

30 (5) To receive grants, contributions, and other
31 funds for the purpose of projects and activities related
32 to responsible fatherhood.

33 (6) To submit a report, on or before January 1 of
34 each year, to the Governor and the General Assembly

1 concerning its findings and recommendations.

2 Section 20. Responsible Fatherhood Fund. Grants,
3 contributions, and other funds received by the Council on
4 Responsible Fatherhood must be deposited into the Responsible
5 Fatherhood Fund, a special fund created in the State
6 treasury, and, subject to appropriation and as directed by
7 the Council may be expended for the purposes of this Act.

8 Section 25. Repeal. This Act is repealed on July 1,
9 2003.

10 Section 90. The State Finance Act is amended by adding
11 Section 5.545 as follows:

12 (30 ILCS 105/5.545 new)

13 Sec. 5.545. The Responsible Fatherhood Fund.

14 Section 99. Effective date. This Act takes effect upon
15 becoming law.