



The Quarterly Newsletter of the Children's Rights Council, Inc.  
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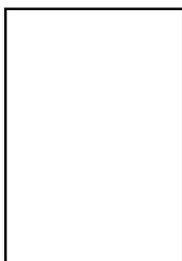
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### Parent Education Seminars Required in Virginia



#### Murray Steinberg Led Long Effort to Get Virginia to Require Parenting Education for Divorcing Parents

All parents involved in custody or visitation (access) disputes must attend parent education seminars in the state of Virginia, according to a new law passed by the legislature and signed by Governor Jim Gilmore (R). The law took effect July 1, 2000 for a two year trial period, after which the law must be reviewed.

The educational seminars are to be conducted "by a qualified person or organization approved by the court, on the effects of separation or divorce on children, parenting responsi-

bilities, options for conflict resolution, and financial responsibilities."

The law states that:

- The charge for participation at such program shall be based on the party's ability to pay, not to exceed \$50. The court may grant an exemption from attendance at such program for a good cause.
- Other than statements or admissions by a party admitting criminal activity or child abuse or neglect, no statement or admission by a party in such seminar or program shall be admissible into evidence in any subsequent proceeding.

Murray Steinberg, head of the Family Resolution Council, a chapter of CRC in Richmond, Virginia, served on several committees established by the legislature over a 4-year effort to get Virginia to require

*Continued on page 3*

**Please Plan on Attending  
CRC's 13th National Conference  
Holiday Inn Bethesda  
(inside the Beltway)  
May 4-6, 2001**

**Reception at the British Embassy Residence and Gardens  
to Benefit CRC  
May 3, the evening before the conference**

"Speak Out for Children" is published by the Children's Rights Council, Inc. Editor: David L. Levy. Contributors to this issue: Al Ellis, Julie Maggiasco, Paul Robinson, John Prior, Ken Skilling, and college student interns Carol Bailey, graduate of Washington State University; Tabitha Blackwell, Campbell University; Amy Carnright, St Joseph's University; Lisa Chavez, University of California at Santa Barbara; Joy Clavecillas, George Washington University; Melissa Dorris, University of Illinois Law School; Jancee Gianotti, Air Force Academy; Mike Gilmore, University of California at Davis; Jennifer Randall, University of Notre Dame; Stephanie Shark, Temple University Law School; Connie Yang, University of Pennsylvania. Layout by Sheila Holzberger.

CRC is a member of



**Children's  
Charities  
of America**

# The CRC

The Children's Rights Council (CRC) is a nation-wide, non-profit IRS 501(c)(3) children's rights organization based in Washington, D.C. CRC works to strengthen families through education and advocacy. We favor family formation and family preservation, but if families break up, or are never formed, we work to assure a child the frequent and continuing contact with two parents and extended family the child would normally have during a marriage. Our motto is "The Best Parent is Both Parents."

For the child's benefit, CRC favors parenting education before marriage, during marriage, and for parents who are unwed or separated. We work to demilitarize divorce between parents who are involved in marital disputes, substituting conciliation and mediation for the adversarial process, and providing for

emotional and financial child support. We work to strengthen fragile families of children whose parents are unwed. We also favor school-based programs for children at risk.

Formed in 1985 by concerned parents who have more than 40 years collective experience in custody reform and early childhood education, CRC has chapters in 32 states, Washington, D.C. and Africa, Asia and Europe. Two national organizations are affiliated with CRC: Mothers Without Custody (MW/OC) and the Stepfamily Association of America (SAA).

Prominent professionals in the fields of religion, law, social work, psychology, child care, education, business, and government comprise our Advisory Panel.

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CRC has two websites: [www.gocrc.com](http://www.gocrc.com) (our main CRC site) and [www.info4parents.com](http://www.info4parents.com) (for expanded parenting information).

CRC's email address: [crcdc@erols.com](mailto:crcdc@erols.com) Speak Out for Children is published four times a year and is sent free to members. Library rate: \$20.00 a year. Send letters, comments and articles for publication to Editor, CRC.

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# Around the Country

## Education Seminars

*Continued from page 1*

parenting education for separating and divorcing parents.

Steinberg drafted the bill after hearing of Elizabeth Hickey's parenting education work in Utah. Steinberg said Virginia Delegate Jack Reid of Henrico County deserves major credit for sponsoring the bill over a several year period until it became law.

Virginia is believed to be the fourth state to require parenting education of all separating parents. Utah was the first state, and Connecticut and New Hampshire the second and third states. Other jurisdictions may mandate attendance by local court order or have informal attendance policies determined on a case-by-case basis.

This is according to a study by Margie Geasler and Karen Blaisure of Western Michigan University, Kalamazoo, who did a nationwide study of parenting education programs. In Utah, the state program was started by Elizabeth Hickey, who trained all the original parenting education directors.

"We have now established a new organization called PEN, the Parent Education Network, to assure compliance with the new law."

Murray can be reached at [family@richmond.net](mailto:family@richmond.net)

**Ask your state legislators to pass a required parenting education bill similar to what recently became law in Virginia.**

## Elían Back in Cuba: The Justice System Worked – Slowly



*Elían*

CRC sums up some observations about 6-year-old Elían Gonzalez.

- The U.S. justice system worked, albeit slowly. It took seven months for the system to decide finally that Elían belonged with his dad, but it was a correct decision, according to INS rules.

- Even if the INS had been judged incorrect in its handling of the case, U.S. law—the PKPA (Parental Kidnapping Prevention Act), the UCCJA (Uniform Child Custody Jurisdiction Act)—and the International Hague Convention, also require that a child be returned to the "home state" or "country of habitual residence" of the child.

- Like many Americans, we wished Juan Miguel Gonzalez would have defected to the U.S., but if he didn't, he was legally entitled to return his child to Cuba.

CRC officers appeared more than 30 times on radio, TV and in print media discussing the Elían Gonzalez case, and CRC President David L. Levy was quoted in a Time magazine cover story on Elían in May.

After the family returned to Cuba, David L. Levy fielded questions from a Cuban-American representative on a radio program. The representative continued to restate the often quoted arguments regarding why Elían had not received fair treatment in the courts. With an eye toward the future, Levy asked how the Cuban and Miami sides of the family could now work towards reconciliation.

Would it help if the Cuban-American community focused on ways to see the boy, rather than on attacking Castro?

CRC understands that Elían's father, Juan Miguel Gonzales, and Lazaro Gonzales, the boy's great uncle, talked on the phone before Juan Miguel and Elían returned to Cuba.

Dr. Audrey Weiss, a family and child counselor in New York City who is a CRC spokesperson, said it would be beneficial to the boy to have contact with his Miami relatives.

"Contact would help because of the bonding that took place in Miami between Elían and his cousins," she said.

Alfred Ellis, CRC's Director of Child Access Services said, "This was not a political issue or a control issue. It is a parenting issue. Elían lost one parent, he deserves the right to be with his father, the surviving parent."



### Order CRC Book and Make Money!

Order bulk copies (10 or more) of the still popular 1993 publication, *The Best Parent is Both Parents*, for only \$4 a copy. Resell the copies for the list price of \$10 each, and make a profit for you or your organization! Individual copies are \$10.

# Seven States Honored For Helping Children and Families

Seven states, Montana, Kansas, Connecticut, Wisconsin, California, Oklahoma, and Florida, were recognized by the Children's Rights Council for outstanding efforts to keep both mothers and fathers in their children's lives.

The awards covered a range of services to help parents before marriage, during marriage and where parents are separated, divorced, or never-married.

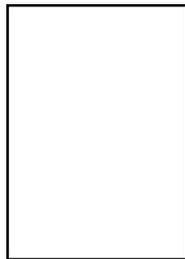
This was the first time such national awards were given by CRC. A press conference was held Wednesday, July 19, 2000, in the Hart Senate Office Building.

Senator James Inhofe (R-OK) and Representatives Bill McCollum (R-FL), Grace Napolitano (R-CA), and Dennis Moore (D-KS) accepted the awards on behalf of their states. Sarah Yoakum, a representative of Oklahoma Governor Frank Keating, flew from Oklahoma to accept the award on behalf of Governor Keating.

A reception followed the press conference. The award categories were:

## Florida: Most Innovative Laws Before Marriage

- Florida's Marriage Preparation and Preservation Act, which provides a discount on marriage licenses for couples planning to marry if they take a pre-marital counseling class; if they do not take the class, they must wait a 3 day "cooling off" period before marriage.
- Divorcing couples with minor children must take a 4 hour course on parenting education.



Moore



(l to r) CRC interns Carrnright and Yang and Representative Napolitano



Yoakum

**The Best States for Shared Parenting—Montana, Kansas, Wisconsin, and Connecticut.**

## California: Best Approach During Marriage and for Divorce

- The best state for marriage counseling during marriage—in order to help parents keep their marriage together if possible.
- Also best approach by requiring mediation (called conciliation) for all separating parents with minor children.

California has more marriage counselors per population than any other state, and has led the way among the states with required mediation.

## Oklahoma: Most Innovative Law in the Event of Separation

- Oklahoma's Parenting Act for establishing shared parenting at the pendente lite (initial stage of litigation), before positions harden, and before litigation ensues. See Fall, 1999 "Speak Out for Children" for more details.

Greg Palumbo, Ph.D., executive director of Oklahomans for Families Alliance, was a catalyst behind passage of the law. Palumbo credits Representatives Bill Graves, Odilia Dank, and Russ Roach, along with Senators Owen Laughlin and James Williamson, for playing key roles in passage of the new law.

The number of physical joint custody awards per separating parents in those states are: Montana: 55.4%, Kansas, 53.3%, Wisconsin, 49.1% and Connecticut, 41.2%, according to the Census Bureau.

In addition, Montana, Kansas and Connecticut lead among states with the lowest divorce rate, which indicates to CRC that if parents know they will have to interact with the other parent through shared parenting, there is less incentive to divorce. The Census Bureau reported on this statistic for only 19 states; Wisconsin was not reported.

Note: CRC focused only on separation and divorce. But because of the serious problems children and families face in separation and divorce, we have come to realize that services need to be provided to assist people who wish to marry, and to help them sustain their marriages where possible. If divorce occurs, or the parents are never-married, children must be assured of a meaningful relationship with both parents whenever possible. As the CRC motto says, "The Best Parent is Both Parents."

A complete report on the selection of these states can be seen on our websites: [gocrc.com](http://gocrc.com) and [info4parents.com](http://info4parents.com) Hard copies from CRC free to CRC members; \$10 for non-members for P/H. **See complete report.**

## Check Out CRC's Two Websites

**www.gocrc.com** This is the main CRC organizational website. We thank CRC Evaluator of Research and Web expert Rick Kuhn (yes, Rick wears two hats) for maintaining the gocrc website, with the assistance of Serge Prengel and Bruce Kaskubar. Thanks to Rick, we

now have a "secure server" on this website, which means you can order books, join or renew in CRC, and register for the conference by credit card.

**www.info4parents.com** We thank Lonnie Perrin, who was worked with young parents in the metropolitan

D.C. area for 15 years, for maintaining this website for all parents, but mainly for never-married parents. This site is supported by a grant from the Annie E. Casey Foundation (see home page for this site below).

Info4Parents | Parenting Resources

SEARCH FOR INFORMATION: parenting resources articles books, videos, etc.

advocacy  
child support  
counseling  
education  
employment  
health  
legal  
parenting  
programs/initiatives  
research  
social services  
home

### welcome!

Welcome to the Children's Rights Council's Info4Parents Website. We want never-married parents to obtain the resources, information, and referrals that will enable them to be what they want to be--better parents to their children.



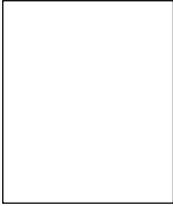
Our site contains names of [parenting support groups](#) arranged two ways--by the type of group that can help you, and the state you live in. The site also contains resources on single parents, marriage, custody, access/visitation/parenting time, parenting education, prevention of abuse and neglect of your child, job sources, and parentage establishment. Also, the site contains [articles](#) as well as tips and information on subjects that can help never-married parents and separated and divorced parents.

The Children's Rights Council is a nationwide, non-profit child-advocacy organization based in Washington, D.C., with chapters in 32 states, Washington, D.C., Europe, Asia and Africa. CRC has been successful in changing laws and attitudes to bring about more involvement by parents in their children's lives. We have brought about more joint custody (shared parenting), mediation, parenting education, parenting plans, and programs and services to unite children with their parents.

Info4Parents.com is being run by the Children's Rights Council under a grant by the [Annie E. Casey Foundation](#) to help never-married parents be the kind of better parents they want to be.

Follow these links to find our more about the [Children's Rights Council](#) and its [accomplishments](#).

advocacy :: child support :: counseling :: education :: employment :: health  
legal :: parenting :: programs/initiatives :: research :: social services :: home



Levy

# The CRC View

by David L. Levy, J.D.  
President, CRC

## Child Support Does not Reduce the Child Poverty Rate

In "The CRC View" (Spring, 2000 newsletter), I stated that the original purpose of the child support collection system was to reduce child poverty, but the child poverty rate had not gone down in 20 years.

A prominent federal official challenged that statement.

I had said that reduction of poverty was cited by Sen. Russell Long in 1980 as the reason for the federal take-over of the national child support system. And one often sees the media stating that a reduction in child poverty has either been achieved, or would be achieved, if only those awful dads would pay their child support.

I said that now, 20 years later, despite financial child support collections having quadrupled because of a huge federal and state bureaucracy, interception of tax returns, jailings, midnight arrests, posting of the "10 Most Wanted" lists, booting of cars, etc. the poverty rate of children remains essentially unchanged.

And you know what? The facts in "The CRC View" were accurate.

The only way poverty would really go down, I stated, was if government, the courts and legislatures end the powerful grip of the "divorce industry" over family life, and encourage and enforce children having frequent and continuing contact with both of their parents.

The reason this would help is that parents who have contact with their children pay far more than parents without such contact, says the Cen-

sus Bureau. But too many parents feel pushed away and forced away from their children by the "divorce industry" that foists litigation and warfare upon parents who happen to get separated or divorce.

Concerning poverty, the 1999 Current Population Report (website [www.childstats.gov](http://www.childstats.gov)) stated that in 1997, 19 percent of children lived in poverty. The U.S. Census Bureau reported that in 1998, the child poverty rate was below 20 percent, at 18.9 percent, for the first time since 1980.

Clearly, there are small discrepancies between the statistics from the Current Population Report and the U.S. Census Bureau. Deciphering which figures are the most accurate can be difficult when separate organizations cling to different statistics.

The biggest national network of food banks, Second Harvest, claims that the poverty rate for children under six years of age is growing extremely fast, though they do not give any figures.

The Children's Defense Fund reported that in 1998, nearly half of children living in families headed by single women were poor, while only 9 percent of children from married families were poor.

A recent report by the USDA (U.S. Department of Agriculture) revealed that households headed by females were much more likely to experience hunger than husband-wife households.

If that news isn't bad enough, we must keep in mind that the poverty rate for children at 18.9 percent is still higher than for any other age group.

CRC legislative intern Carol Bailey found that for 1998, the following poverty rates applied:

Under Age 18	=	18.9%
18-24	=	16.6%
25-34	=	11.9%
35-44	=	9.1%
45-54	=	9.2%

60-64	=	10.1%
65 and over	=	10.5%

## Kids Need Emotional Support, Too

After reviewing the reports from the various governmental and private organizations, it is clear that the child poverty rate has not experienced any major declines. Since the 1993 peak of 22.7 percent, the poverty rate has only dropped 3.8 percent in five years. In 1959, the child poverty rate was 27.3 percent.

The poverty rate continues to fluctuate, with the numerical ups and downs akin to the roller coasters kids love to ride. But should some kids have enough to eat, and others not? Why shouldn't all kids experience good emotional as well as good financial health?

The sad truth is that the child poverty rate in America has remained fairly consistent over the last twenty years.

The people who gave us the "divorce industry," with its promise that sole mother custody for the past 30 years would reduce poverty, were wrong.

Many children from single parent homes turn out fine, and single parents do all they can for their children. It's just that children's needs are often different from adult needs. Kids need their moms and dads, even if mom doesn't like dad, or dad doesn't like mom.

Let's emphasize the two parent family, preferably in marriage, but if not marriage, when the parents are never-married, separated and divorced. We will cut down on poverty—financial as well as emotional, moral and spiritual.

## CRC Receives 3 Grants

The CRC National Office has received three grants during the year 2000. They are:

- a grant from the Annie E. Casey Foundation to establish a website primarily for never-married parents. It is [www.info4parents.com](http://www.info4parents.com) The Casey grant is also for CRC to gauge the interest of members of the faith-based community to operate a transfer center such as CRC operates in various states and Washington, D.C.;
- CRC received a three-year renewal for our Maryland access (visitation) grant for services to be provided in Prince George's County. CRC provides neutral transfer sites for children, a Hotline for parents (301-552-8400), a monthly support group meeting, and referral services for parenting education, parenting plans, and mediation. We previously received this grant for one year, but it has now been renewed for three years;
- CRC received a grant for the third year in a row from the Washington, D.C. Superior Court to provide parenting services in the nation's capital. CRC provides a Hotline (202-543-8400), referrals, and services, including parenting classes, neutral drop-off for children, and supervised access. Many of these services are provided by CRC's Washington, D.C. chapter headed by Frank Banner. The D.C. Superior Court administers the grant under Chief Judge Eugene N. Hamilton and Acting Associate Deputy for Court Services Dr. Cheryl Bailey; while the funds are provided by the D.C. Child Support Office, under director Philip Browning and Ms. Jessie Ball.

**CRC and our chapters need grant and proposal writers.**

## What Kids Need

### Talk to Me

*from "Talking with Kids about Tough Issues,"  
from the National Initiative by Children Now and the Kaiser Family Fund  
National Survey*

Parents, did you know that your kids want to talk to you about important issues? Kids ages 10-15 want to know more about how to handle potentially volatile situations, including

- if someone has a gun at school;
- how to know when you are ready to have sex;
- how to handle peer pressure in relation to drugs, sex, alcohol;
- what are STD's and AIDS and how to protect against them and pregnancy (including birth control options); and
- drinking and driving.

Unfortunately, you do not have much time to discuss these issues. If you wait until Junior High, it may be too late.

Many parents do not realize that by age 10 (and in many cases earlier), some kids are carrying weapons, having sex, sharing drugs, and drinking alcohol. Obviously not all kids are doing this. But the pressure to "just try" one of these things is very real and very scary for your children. And if they do not get answers from you, they will seek them from someone else.

For separated and divorced families, the challenge to talk to kids becomes even greater. Research shows that children need to be able to talk with both parents. Therefore, parents need to work together to instill similar values and ways to stay safe in potentially dangerous situations.

### 10 Tips

1. Start early: Before the teenage years kids turn to their parents. Around the time of Junior High, they look elsewhere for answers.
2. Initiate conversations with your child: use simple, short words and straightforward explanations.
- 3 ...Even about sex and relationships. Remember, if you are uncomfortable talking to your kids about these issues, your kids will be uncomfortable talking to you.
4. Create an open environment.
5. Communicate your values.
6. Listen to your child: not all important issues are signaled by ringing bells and whistles. You must pay attention and really listen to what your kids are saying.
7. Try to be honest.
8. Be patient.
9. Use everyday opportunities to talk.
10. Talk about it again and again.

A website that addresses these issues and helps parents help their children is [www.talkingwithkids.org](http://www.talkingwithkids.org) CRC has linked this and many other websites to our parenting website at [www.info4parents.com](http://www.info4parents.com)

### Change of Address

To keep newsletters and other materials coming, please notify CRC three weeks in advance of any address change. Send old and new addresses to CRC, 300 "I" Street N.E., Suite 401, Washington, DC 20002.

### Important Phone Number

The phone number for the Congressional switchboard, which will reach all offices and committees, is (202) 225-3121.



# Equal Parents' Week 2000



**Hold a Vigil Sept. 27 at 8 P.M. EST  
Help Publicize "The Best Parent Is Both Parents"**

## **Equal Parents' Week 2000 Just Say YES!**

Equal Parents' Week will be held September 25 to October 1, 2000.

Spread the word to family, friends, and other organizations to join in tying purple ribbons, and to join "A Moment in Our Hearts, A Moment of Solidarity" by holding public and "Home Vigils" on Wednesday, September 27, 2000 to make Equal Parents' Week's message stronger than ever.

"One of the most critical elements of family preservation has been and continues to be left out at the local, state, and national levels of government in leg-

islating and enforcing child support and custody laws: namely, a 2-parent focus," said Patti Diroff, CRC's Equal Parents' Week Coordinator.

This year, Equal Parents' Week is advocating that a 2-parent focus be established as our national priority, maximizing the involvement of both parents to meet all their children's needs without compromising or imposing financial impediments to nonfinancial forms of child support.

To call attention to 2-parent focus is the "Just Say Yes! to joint custody" campaign. "Just Say Yes!" calls attention to the problem of parental "veto" which unreasonably and arbitrarily defeats shared parenting and all too often deprives children from the contact they

need and deserve from loving and responsible parents through laws or judicial discretion. Vetoing shared parenting is a choice. The response of statutes and judges should instead require parents to make a choice to exercise their first responsibility as a parent...to "just say yes" to making a commitment to doing what is truly in children's best interest...to "just say yes" to unconditionally loving and sacrificing for their children...and that means, "Just Say Yes!" to shared parenting.

Comments, ideas and suggestions should be directed to Patti Diroff at (909) 591-3689 and [pattidiroff@worldnet.att.net](mailto:pattidiroff@worldnet.att.net) The Equal Parents' Week website can be viewed at <http://members.tripod.com/epweek>.

## **CRC Training Session Sept. 16**

CRC will hold an all day meeting Saturday, Sept 16, 2000 (9 A.M. to 5 P.M.) for chapter heads, chapter members and members of CRC interested in becoming active in CRC or active in a chapter. Topics: chapter development, grant development, marketing.



*Circle is BWI airport near Baltimore;  
star is hotel*

Location: Ramada Inn, 6 miles from BWI Airport, between Baltimore and Washington, D.C. The meeting is only \$20 per person, lunch included. Seating is limited. Friday evening and/or Saturday evening dinner get-together optional at individual expense if people are interested.

Contact CRC if you wish to attend.

Hotel rooms from \$69 to \$82 depending on number of occupants. Free continental breakfast; free shuttle to BWI. Reserve rooms by calling 1-800-2RAMADA, ask for Ramada Inn Hanover, MD., ask for special CRC rate.

## **Contact Other CRC Members by E-mail**

Send and receive e-mail from other CRC members around the country.

If you are a CRC member, e-mail the following message to Harry Prillaman, CRC Coordinator for Georgia, who is supervising this service. He can be reached at [ppilla@us.ibm.com](mailto:ppilla@us.ibm.com)

*Dear Harry. I am a national CRC member who would like to join the [crc-general@egroups.com](mailto:crc-general@egroups.com) distribution list.*

Call the CRC national office at 202-547-6227 or fax 202-546-4272 to make sure your national membership is current.

## **Get a 3.9 percent CRC Credit Card**

Get the CRC VISA Credit Card, and obtain a low 3.9 percent introductory rate. The credit card displays the CRC logo, and CRC receives a small contribution every time you use the card. CRC receives more if you break up a large purchase into several small purchases. For an application, contact CRC, or call MBNA at 1-800-523-7666.

## **Correction from Last Issue**

The story about Eloise Anderson, newest CRC Advisor, should have said that she is the former head of the California Department of Social Services, who is now Director of the Program for the American Family, Claremont Institute, Sacramento, California.

## Letters to the Editor

Editor:

I am Eric Bleicken, making my second run for Congress from Cape Cod (2nd District of Massachusetts). If elected, I will work to end judicial immunity, hold DSS bureaucrats legally accountable, demand that perjury be prosecuted, schedule hearings on how bogus restraining orders are being used to gain advantage in divorce and custody cases, fight against unconstitutional gun seizures, and unreasonable divisions of property.

In my first run from the Cape Cod area in 1998, I took one third of the votes spending only about \$8,000 to the incumbent's \$800,000. Please help our cause. Thank you.

Eric Bleichen,  
170B Pleasant St.  
S. Yarmouth, MA 02664.

*Note: CRC cannot endorse candidates for Congress. But we can print a letter such as the above.*

Editor:

I am in awe at the speed at which I received my son's school records after you, Children's Rights Council, called the school principal.

Let me tell you how fast I received those records that I requested for almost two years. The same day that I received your letter informing me of your conversation with the school principal is the same day I received the records. They sent them out the day you called them.

I would like to thank you personally, Mr. Levy, and the Children's Rights Council.

Michael Short-Brennan  
Kenedy, TX

*(CRC phoned the U.S. Education Department office that handles the Educational Rights and Privacy Act—FERPA—which has responsibility for making school records available to non-custodial parents, at 202-260-3887. CRC held a three-way phone conversation between an Education Dept. representative, CRC, and a school official).*

## Updated Parenting Directory Available

Help More People! Find out about the 1,050 other groups around the country working on family issues, so that you can make referrals to parents who call you and need help.

See this "CRC Parenting Directory" on one of our websites, [www.info4parents.com](http://www.info4parents.com) Or order a hardcopy or disc from CRC.

The directory contains listings of about 1,050 organizations that work in areas such as custody, access (visitation), and prevention of parental kidnapping.

The website is free. The hardcopy or disc are \$12 for CRC members, and \$15 for non-members. CRC thanks Paul Robinson and Ed Mudrak for their hard work in updating this Directory.

Please fax us corrections or updates on information whenever you can, to 202-546-4272.

## A Way to Adjust the Guideline

Ask a state agency working on child support guidelines in your state to invite Don Bieniewicz, CRC's expert on guidelines, to testify.

Asking Bieniewicz to testify could help convince your state to adopt portions of the only guideline we know of that is based on a child having two parents.

This CRC guideline, authored by Bieniewicz, was published by the federal government in a publication entitled "Child Support Guidelines: The Next Generation."

Write to Bieniewicz at 10004 Fairoaks Road, Vienna, VA 22181, contact him via email at [DonBien@erols.com](mailto:DonBien@erols.com), or phone 703-255-0837 (evenings).



## Bequest in a Will

CRC thanks longtime CRC member John Siegmund of Virginia for making a substantial donation to CRC from the estate of his deceased mother, Mary. Mary Siegmund, while she was alive, was a member of CRC. We very much appreciate this contribution, and accept it in memory of Mary Siegmund.

Keep working for children. If you wish to consider leaving a bequest or property to CRC, please state the following in your will: "I hereby leave the following to the Children's Rights Council: — (state your bequest)."

Beat the tax man! Contribute to CRC!

# Congressional Update

## Senate Considers \$150 Million Fatherhood Bill

### House Committee Ties Popular Child Support Bill to Fatherhood Bill

The Senate continues to consider a "Responsible Fatherhood" bill (S. 1364) that would provide \$150 million to encourage the role of fathers as parents in low-income families and to help fathers better provide for their children.

The Senate bill is a counterpart to the "Fathers Count Act" (H.R. 3073), passed by the House of Representatives on November 10, 1999, by a vote of 328 to 93.

The House Human Resources Subcommittee passed the Child Support Distribution of Act, H.R. 4678 in June, and "attached" the Fatherhood bill to that Child Support Act. By "re-passing" the very same fatherhood bill the House passed in 1999, the committee is saying to the Senate: "Pass this legislation—we'll make it easy for you—child support and fatherhood, all in one package."

Sponsors of the House version of both bills—The "Fathers Count Act" and the "Child Support Distribution Act," are Reps. Nancy Johnson (R-CT) and Ben Cardin (D-MD).

The Child Support bill would provide more child support money to families leaving welfare and simplify the rules governing the assignment and distribution of child support collected by the states.



*Domenici*



*Bayh*

### ***Senate Considers Bill to Help with Emotional and Financial Support of Children***

In an unusual display of unity, a dozen different groups, including women's organizations, family organizations, and CRC, all wrote opposing the proposal by House Republicans to increase privatization in the bill. CRC's view was that companies like Lockheed Martin and Maximus would not reach out to parents the way child support offices are increasing doing. House Republicans dropped the privatization provision and asked the groups to now support the amended bill.

A hearing was held July 25 on the Fatherhood legislation by the Senate Finance Committee's Subcommittee on Social Security and Family Policy, under Sen. Don Nickles (R-OK). Because

the long-awaited Senate hearing has now been held, there is a strong chance that fatherhood legislation can be worked out between House and Senate versions this Fall.

Congress is considering the Fatherhood bill as part of its continuing efforts on welfare reform and welfare-to-work initiatives. With many mothers now coming off welfare, Congress knows that they must have the financial help of fathers. But the Fatherhood bill goes beyond welfare-to-work incentives, and encourages the role of fathers as parents in low-income families and to help fathers better provide for their children.

Some observers have referred to this bill as a parenting bill, because it will have the ultimate purpose of assisting children to have more involvement by both parents in their lives. Some services and programs are expected to reach out to low-income mothers and divorced parents.

Previous legislation that helped parents to function as parents is the \$10 million a year in access (visitation) funds that Congress has provided to the states since 1997.

Sponsors of the Senate Fatherhood bill are Sens. Pete Domenici (R-NM) and Evan Bayh (D-IN).

### **Amicus Briefs May be Available**

If your case is on appeal, and you would like CRC to consider writing an amicus brief, contact CRC. CRC cannot handle cases at the trial level, and we do not write the main appeal brief. An amicus brief is a supplemental brief, telling the court why this case is of significance not only to the parties in the case, but to other children and families as well. We generally need 30 to 60 days before the filing deadline.

### **Chapter Needed in NYS**

CRC needs to develop a new chapter in upstate New York. The chapter might be able to run an access grant. For information, contact CRC at 202-547-6227 or call Kim Frey at 607/785-9338.

# Family Facts

## The Negative Effects of Divorce on Children; and Some Remedies

Patrick F. Fagan and Robert Rector  
The Heritage Foundation

Each year more than 1 million American children suffer the divorce of their parents; moreover, half of the children born this year to parents who are married will see their parents divorce before they turn 18. Mounting evidence in social science journals demonstrates the devastating physical, emotional, and financial effects that divorce is having on these children will last well into adulthood and affect future generations: Among those broad and lasting effects are:

- \* Children whose parents have divorced are increasingly the victims of health, behavioral and emotional problems, are involved more frequently in crime and drug abuse, and have higher rates of suicide:

- \* Children of divorce perform more poorly in reading, spelling and math, are more likely to repeat a grade and to have higher drop-out rates and lower rates of college graduation
- \* Families with children that were not poor before the divorce, see their income drop by fifty percent.
- \* Religious worship has been seen to contribute to better health, longer marriages, and better family life. These areas drop after the parents divorce.

The authors recommend a restoration of the value of marriage back into our society, in the following ways:

- \* Establish, by resolution, a national goal of reducing divorce;
- \* Establish pro-marriage demonstration programs;
- \* Mandate that surplus welfare funds be used to strengthen marriage;
- \* Rebuild the federal-state system for gathering statistics on marriage and divorce;
- \* Create a public health campaign;
- \* Give a one-time tax credit to always-married couples when their youngest children reach 18.

Governing marriage, state laws should:

- \* Establish a goal to reduce the divorce rate;
- \* Require married couples with minor children to complete divorce education;
- \* Promote community-wide marriage programs;
- \* End "no-fault" divorce for parents with children under age 18;
- \* Make the Covenant Marriage option available to engaged couples, which lengthens the process for obtaining of a divorce by two years.

CRC has recommended to the Heritage Foundation that they include greater access to both parents as way of assisting in encouraging marriages. The Census Bureau has found that states with the highest amount of shared physical custody subsequently have the lowest divorce rates. The Heritage Foundation is considering this recommendation.

The above facts (except the CRC recommendation) are from the article by Fagan and Rector entitled *The Effects of Divorce on America* in The Heritage Foundation Backgrounder. For copies of the article, visit [www.heritage.org/library/backgrounder/bg1373.html](http://www.heritage.org/library/backgrounder/bg1373.html).

The Heritage Foundation is a conservative think tank based in Washington, D.C.

### Shared Parenting More Widespread than Commonly Believed

A recently released report from the U.S. Census Bureau provides new evidence that shared parenting is more widespread than commonly believed. The 1998 Survey of Program Dynamics (SPD), released in May, 2000, is a follow-up of a population survey originally undertaken in 1992. In 1998, the included categories for joint legal and joint physical custody for the first time. Previous Census surveys required children to be reported as either living with mother or living with father, with children in shared custody situations divided between these categories.

Based on this government data, CRC estimates shared custody at approximately zero in 1980, with an increase of just under one point a year between 1980 and 1991, and increasing by about one point a year since then. CRC's model estimates that 11.9% of divorced families had shared physical custody in 1992, with nearly 20% in 1999.

Shared physical custody requires that a child spent at least 30% of his or her time with a parent on a year-round basis.

For further information, contact Rick Kuhn, CRC Evaluator of Research, care of CRC.



# Children's Rights Council



**IN THE COMBINED FEDERAL CAMPAIGN,  
CONTRIBUTE TO THE CHILDREN'S RIGHTS COUNCIL (CRC)**



We are #1513 in the Children's Charities of America (CCA). Look for CRC's listing in the index of the CFC Brochure, then turn to the page given for CCA's members. You may donate to CRC online at our website at [www.gocrc.com](http://www.gocrc.com)

**Children's  
Charities  
of America**

The Children's Rights Council works to assure that children of separation and divorce obtain as much emotional and financial support as children of intact marriages.



Some of CRC's accomplishments:

- ♥ Credited with being the organization that convinced Congress, for the first time in history, to provide funds for access/visitation demonstration programs in 1988;
- ♥ The results of the above 1988 grants were so positive that in the 1996 Welfare Reform Law, Congress provided \$10 million a year for **all** 50 states and jurisdictions to provide access/visitation programs;
- ♥ Publicized findings in 1998 from Census Bureau and National Center for Health Statistics that the states with the highest amount of joint physical custody in 1989-1990 had the lowest divorce rates in the subsequent years 1991-1995;
- ♥ Publicized findings that children with two parents generally have fewer problems with drugs and crimes than children with only one parent. Obtained changes in attitudes and laws in order to encourage a child's bonding to two parents and extended family;
- ♥ Promoted the school-based "Banana Splits" program to help children of separation and divorce channel the transition in their lives into stronger academic achievement;
- ♥ CRC and its chapters established transfer sites for children, parenting education and other programs in MD, VA, IL, NY, NE, OH and Washington, D.C.
- ♥ Provided assistance to parents and professionals on how to get through the divorce process in the most peaceful, problem-free way, so as to take the stress out of divorce. Money that would be spent on battling between parents is available for the children.



**CRC only receives funds that you actually designate!**

The Children's Rights Council is a national non-profit organization at 300 "I" St., NE #401, Washington, D.C. 20002-4389. Phone: 202/547-6227 Fax: 202/546-4272. See our web sites at [www.gocrc.com](http://www.gocrc.com) and [www.info4parents.com](http://www.info4parents.com)

To obtain a copy of our Catalog of Resources, Directory of Parenting Organizations, Affiliation Book, Annual Report, or latest audit, write or call CRC. Thank you.



**PLEASE COPY, DISTRIBUTE, AND POST IN  
FEDERAL OFFICES, POST OFFICES, AND MILITARY BASES.**



# CHILDREN'S RIGHTS COUNCIL



**IN UNITED WAY, WORKPLACE, AND CORPORATE CAMPAIGNS,  
CONTRIBUTE TO THE CHILDREN'S RIGHTS COUNCIL (CRC).**



CRC works to strengthen families through education and advocacy. We favor family formation and family preservation, but if families break up, or are never formed, we work to assure a child the frequent and continuing contact with two parents and extended family the child would normally have during marriage. Our motto is "The Best Parent is Both Parents."



For the child's benefit, CRC favors parenting education before marriage, during marriage, and in the event of separation. We work to demilitarize divorce between parents who are involved in marital disputes, substituting mediation for the adversarial process, and providing for emotional and financial child support. We also favor school-based programs for children at risk.

**There are several ways you can contribute to the Children's Rights Council:**



♥ through the Combined Federal Campaign if you work for the federal government at any federal office, post office, or military base;

♥ in the Washington, D.C. and San Francisco Bay Area United Way campaigns;

♥ in the Virginia and Maryland State Employee Campaigns;

♥ if you wish to contribute to CRC through a United Way where we are not listed, please ask your employer if you can designate (write in) the Children's Rights Council;



♥ in corporate campaigns throughout the United States; or

♥ if you wish to contribute directly to CRC, write to CRC, 300 "I" Street N.E., Suite 401, Washington, D.C. 20002-4389.

**Contributions accepted on Visa, MC, or AMEX credit cards.**



You may donate to the Children's Rights Council on our Website at [www.gocrc.com](http://www.gocrc.com)

You may also visit us at [www.info4parents.com](http://www.info4parents.com)

*All contributions are tax-deductible.*

**CHILDREN FIRST!**

**THANK YOU!**

**To join, or for more information, call (202) 547-6227.**

300 "I" Street N.E. • Suite 401 • Washington, D.C. • 20002 • Telephone (202) 547-6227 • Fax (202) 546-4CRC (4272)

**COPY, DISTRIBUTE, AND POST FOR UNITED WAY,  
WORKPLACE, AND CORPORATE CAMPAIGNS.**

# Around the Country

## Contribute to the Non-Custodial Parents Quilt

*Serge Prengel,  
New York City CRC*

CRC's "Quilt" is a collection of photographs of divorced parents with their children that is on permanent display on the internet ([www.betterdivorce.com/quilt/](http://www.betterdivorce.com/quilt/)).

The quilt honors the love of the unseen parents - the non-custodial parents who cannot be as involved with their children as they'd like to be.

There is symbolic value in this quilt. For one thing, this virtual quilt works the same way a real quilt does. As individual non-custodial parents, we feel that our love for our children is not seen by the world, just as the pieces of fabric that make up a quilt are relatively insignificant by themselves. Put together, our capacity to give love and warmth becomes more visible to all.

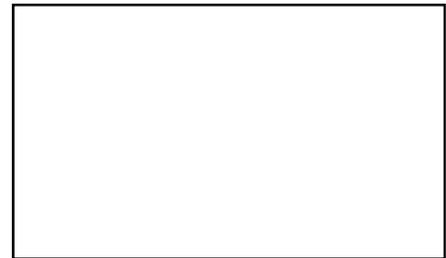
When you look at the quilt, you'll be struck by the variety of situations and moods captured by these snapshots.



They're all different, and yet, they're all expressions of how precious the parent-child relationship is, and how much it means to us. When you click on any picture on the quilt, you can go to a page where that pic-

ture is bigger, and the parent has described in a few words the family's situation.

The quilt is divided into two sections, the fathers' section and the mothers' section, to clearly affirm that children need both a mother and a father. This is in line with CRC's mission—we believe that children need continued contact with both parents after divorce, and we work to keep both parents involved in the lives of their children. The quilt is a work in progress that is expanding as more loving parents submit pictures. Stop by the website to learn more about the Quilt and see how you can become a part of it: [www.betterdivorce.com/quilt/](http://www.betterdivorce.com/quilt/)



**3 CRC Interns (l to r)  
Carnright, Gianotti, Randall,  
at Fathers Day Rally**

## Fathers Day Rally

Nearly 100 people gathered on Fathers Day to march from the White House to the Capitol as part of "FathersDay2000." This was an effort to support the tens of thousands of dads nationwide who, organizers noted, are kept from participating in the rearing of their children. Speakers shared personal stories and called for new laws to protect their rights as caregivers.

Marchers came from all over the country and from various backgrounds. The crowd included men, women, and children. Representatives of the Children's Rights Council showed support for the march's theme of equal custody rights for fathers and mothers. CRC Interns Amy Carnright, Janee Gianotti, and Jennifer Randall carried a CRC banner and handed out CRC newsletters.

The crowd, although small, has been growing in number over the three years since David Wilson and Greg Romeo began organizing the march. Pictures of the march can be seen on the website <[www.FathersDay2000.org](http://www.FathersDay2000.org)>. Plans are already in the works for a FathersDay2001.

### CRC Needs

- ☪ Free or reduced-fee office space. Get a tax write-off as you help kids and CRC. 1,200 square feet or more anywhere in the Washington, D.C. area (Maryland, D.C. or Virginia).
- ☪ A new photocopy machine.
- ☪ Volunteers to help with filing, phone calls, and writing letters.
- ☪ Our chapters need computers.
- ☪ Lawyers to write CRC Amicus Briefs on appeal.

Our chapters around the country could use office space, photocopiers, and volunteers, too!

**We thank Bladen  
Lithography in  
Gaithersburg, MD for  
providing printing  
services to CRC.**

Here are some important bills and resolutions in Congress affecting families. Write to your House member or Senator to let them know what you think of a particular bill. They do not get enough mail on issues of concern to CRC members. So contact them! Let them know what sort of legislation you would like to see passed!

Write

Senator — (name)

Washington, D.C. 20510

Representative — (name)

Washington, D.C. 20515

## House Bills

### Bills Affecting Child Custody Stalking Prevention

**H.R. 1869**, the Stalking Prevention and Victim Protection Act, passed the House, referred to Senate Judiciary Committee, 202-224-8081, sponsored by Rep. Sue Kelly (D-NY). A companion Senate measure was introduced in January 2000 by Sen. John Ashcroft (S. 2011). A similar bill (S. 1660) sponsored by Sen. Kay Bailey Hutchison was previously introduced. The bills would amend Title 18 of the U.S. Code and broaden the definition of stalking in interstate or foreign commerce to apply to those who act "with the intent to injure or harass" another person and engage in conduct "that places an individual, a member of their immediate family or intimate partner in reasonable fear" of death or bodily injury.

The bills would not take the place of state anti-stalking statutes but would provide for federal prosecution where a stalker threatens an individual by telephone, mail, or e-mail. The bills indicate that stalking includes "harassment," a term not defined in U.S. statutes. Because harassment is a charge frequently leveled by one parent against another during divorce, the bill will almost certainly lead to greater abuse of court restraining orders by vindictive parents. Under the new proposals, no clear guidelines are given for the removal of restraining orders.

The Ashcroft bill is being considered by the Constitutional Subcommittee of the Senate Judiciary Committee, (202-224-8081).

**S. 51, Title II**, combined with S. 245,

Senate Judiciary Committee, 202-224-8081, Study of Child Custody Laws in Domestic Violence Cases, introduced by Sen. Joe Biden (D-DE), Authorizes the Attorney General to make grants to States and Indian tribal governments to enable them to enter into contracts and cooperative agreements to assist public or private non-profit entities in establishing and operating supervised visitation centers for purposes of facilitating supervised visitation and visitation exchange of children by and between parents. Requires that priority be given to States that consider domestic violence in making a custody decision and require findings on the record. Currently in the Senate Judiciary Committee.

**Write to Sen. Biden, Senate Judiciary Committee, and your Senator, stating that Congress has already provided for the exchange sites we seek, but in a more general, family-friendly way, in the 1996 Welfare Reform Law. CRC seeks an increase in funding for those access/visitation/parenting programs.**

**S. 51, Sec. 302**, Senate Judiciary Committee, Directs the Attorney General to study and report to Congress on Federal and State laws relating to child custody, including the Parental Kidnapping Prevention Act of 1980, and their effect on child custody cases in which domestic violence is a factor. Requires study to examine the burdens and risks encountered by victims of domestic violence arising from compliance with the full faith and credit (and judicial jurisdiction) requirements of that Act.

**Write to your Senator and Sen. Biden stating that Sec. 302 of the proposed law should direct the Attorney General to also report on the frequency of use and effect of false allegations of abuse in the midst of custody (visitation)**

battles, which have been noted by the American Bar Association and other organizations. America must deal with false abuse accusations in order to help children who really have been abused, as officials in Texas and other states have decided.

The Senate has two other VAWA measures. S. 245, was introduced in January 1999 by Sen. Orrin Hatch (R-UT) and referred to the Judiciary Committee. Another bill, S. 1321, was re-introduced by Sen. Paul Wellstone (D-WI) which did not pass in the earlier session of Congress. As part of that bill, supervised visitation centers would be established for children who witness domestic violence at home. The bill would also increase the role of schools in providing assistance.

### Bills Affecting Financial Child Support

#### Denial of Passports

**H.R. 521**. Denial of Passports to Noncustodial Parents in Cases of Nonpayment of Child Support. Introduced by Rep. Robert Andrews (D-NJ). Referred to House International Relations Committee and the House Subcommittee for International Operations and Human Rights. It is a bill that would deny passports to noncustodial parents subject to State arrest warrants in cases of nonpayment of child support awards.

Write to Chairman Benjamin A. Gilman, (R-NY), House International Relations Committee and Chairman Christopher Smith (R-NJ), House Subcommittee for International Operations and Human Rights, Washington, D.C. 20515, asking that passports should also be denied to individuals in violation of custody and access/visitation orders.

### Bankruptcy Reform Act Provisions Would Prioritize Financial Child Support

The Bankruptcy Reform Act of 1999, H.R. 833, introduced by Rep. George Gekas, passed in the House on

*Continued on page 16*

## Child Custody

*Continued from page 15*

May 5, 1999. A similar measure from Sen. Grassley (R-IA) was considered by the Senate, S. 625. Senator Hatch (R-UT) in November, 1999, gave a speech on the Senate floor where he proposed strengthening the protection of child support obligations during bankruptcy proceedings. The Senate voted to act on HR 833 which passed the Senate on February 2, 2000, and the bill went to a conference committee to reconcile differences between House and Senate versions.

The bill is expected to be signed into law by President Clinton by the time you receive this newsletter. Overall, the bill gives greater protection to collect support obligations than current law provides. The new law would ensure that available assets first go to pay a support obligation, before credit card debt, tax obligation, or any other debt. Previously, certain obligations, such as taxes, were to be discharged prior to child support arrearages. The new law would change that priority, and if there are any assets, they would go first to child support. The new bill also toughens requirements that the bankruptcy trustee notify persons owed child support and government collection agencies of the pending bankruptcy proceeding.

For further information, contact House Subcommittee on Commercial and Administrative Law, 202/225-2835.

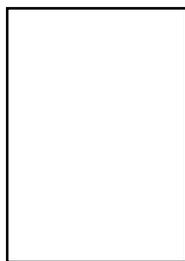
### Bill Would Require IRS to Collect Support

**H.R.1488**, hearing held by House Human Resources Subcommittee, 202-225-1025, but bill not expected to be passed. Compassion for Children and Child Support Enforcement Act of 1999 introduced by Rep. Henry Hyde (R-IL). This bill would require the Internal Revenue Service to collect and disburse child support payments. A hearing was held by the Human Resources subcommittee of the Ways and Means Committee (202/225-1025) on March 16, 2000. State child support administrators and other child support experts oppose federalizing child support, and the bill is not expected to be approved by the subcommittee.

## Child Support Disbursement Unit

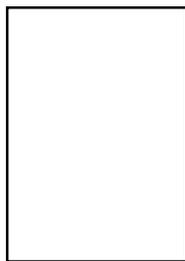
**S.1033**, passed by House and Senate. Child Support Penalty Fairness Act. introduced by Sen. Dianne Feinstein (D-CA). Referred to Senate Finance Committee. It is a bill to amend Title IV of the Social Security Act to coordinate the penalty for the failure of a State to operate a State child support disbursement unit with the alternative penalty procedure for failures to meet data processing requirements.

### Bills to Strengthen Family Life and Marriage



*Ehlers*

**H. Res. 280**, passed the House on June 12, 2000, sponsored by Rep. Vernon J. Ehlers (R-MI), referred to the Senate. Recognizes the importance of strong marriage in general, and the Greater Grand Rapids Community Marriage Policy in particular. That policy outlines a menu for a successful marriage, including not marrying too young, finishing school, choosing a mate with similar values, dating at least a year before marriage, completing a premarital course, waiting to cohabit until after marriage, emphasizing the positive, sharing household duties, worshiping together, having fun together, and remembering that commitment is the foundation to successful marriage. **Urge your Senators to pass this Resolution.**



*Moynihan*

**S. 208** Enhancing Family Life Act, sponsored by Sen. Daniel Patrick Moynihan was referred to the Finance Committee. It would provide "second chance homes" to custodial parents under age 19 and their children where they would have a supportive and supervised living arrangement and be required to learn parenting skills,

including child development, family budgeting, health and nutrition, and other skills to promote their long-term economic independence and well-being of their children.

**CRC recommends writing to Sen. Moynihan to ask that connecting children to both of the child's parents be part of the bill.**

### CRC Wants Chapters in Every State

**CRC WANTS CHAPTERS IN EVERY STATE! GO CRC!!**

For development of chapters in states that do not yet have any CRC chapters:

Re: states out west, contact CRC Board Member from the chapters Terry Cady in Illinois.

Re: states in the south, contact Board Advisor from the chapters Fred Wall in North Carolina.

Re: states in the east, contact Board Advisor from the chapters Margaret Wuwert in Ohio.

See their names and numbers on page 30.

For states in the east, you may also contact Ron Pilcher, 513/755-2932.

Join CRC, then ask for a copy of the 100-page CRC booklet that explains everything you need to know about affiliation. The cost of the booklet is \$15.00.

### Intellectual Property Protection

Charlie Ruggiero, who obtained trademark protection for the name and logo "Children's Rights Council" and the name and logo for our newsletter "Speak Out for Children" is a specialist in trademark, patent, copyright, and licensing law. He is a partner in the law firm of Ohlandt, Greeley, Ruggiero and Perle, 1 Landmark Square, Suite 903, Stamford, CT 06901, telephone (203) 327-6067.

## Disabuse Congress of the Notion that Shared Parenting is Linked to Violence

An anti-joint custody provision originally appeared in Section 241 of H.R. 3514, the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) II and a 1998 House Joint Resolution (HJR 182), which thanks in part to efforts of CRC members was not adopted.

A similar anti shared parenting provision was re-inserted in the 1999 version of the Violence Against Women Act, H.R. 357, introduced by Rep. John Conyers (D-Mich) and supported by 178 co-sponsors. CRC members were urged to write to Congress opposing the “primary caretaker” parent language in Section 241.

So many of you wrote in opposition to that anti-joint resolution, that opponents of shared parenting have now “watered down” the anti-joint custody resolution.

We must oppose that resolution, also, but first let us explain that CRC is very concerned about family violence, and the need to prevent it and treat it. Family violence is not acceptable. CRC works with advocates to prevent and reduce family violence.

Researchers have found that there is no link between shared parenting and family violence. Quite the reverse. Family violence, as well as other societal problems, including high crime and drug rates, lower academic performance, teenage suicide, promiscuity, and other society problems, are linked to a different kind of family structure—the single parent family.

Many children of single-parent households turn out fine, but statistically, anti-social behaviors have been linked for the past 30 by all researchers to a lack of two parents in a child’s life.

As just one example, the 6 year old boy who shot and killed a 6 year old girl in a school in Michigan was growing up a crack house without either his father or his mother.

The watered down version of the anti-joint custody resolution in H.R. 3315 states:

**Please photocopy or retype this letter and send to your House member. Get your friends to write, also!**

Date

Your address

Congress member (add name)  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear —

I ask you to please oppose Title VI, Sec. 601 of H.R. 3315 (The Ready Act—reducing the Effects of Abuse and Domestic Violence on Youth). **I am concerned that the language of the resolution might mistakenly convey an impression to federal, state, or local policymakers that domestic violence shares a link in some manner with shared custody.**

This would be a terrible disservice to all children at risk from family violence. There is abundant evidence that the great majority of child victims of physical abuse and neglect live in single parent homes. By contrast, the incidence of child abuse and neglect of children in shared legal and physical custody arrangements is very low. Children raised without their fathers as well as mothers are twice as likely to be victims of abuse and five times as likely to live in poverty compared to children both of whose parents, dads and moms, participate in the parenting process.

The language of the resolution is over-broad.

The use of the terms “history of domestic violence” and “abuse” might be subject to overly-expansive interpretation. States should design their own specific, detailed statutory criteria narrowly tailored to those limited instances in which shared or joint custody would be inappropriate.

For example, although the District of Columbia starts with a presumption for joint custody, there is an exception in those instances where a judicial officer finds by a preponderance of the evidence that an intra-family offense as defined in the D.C. Code has taken place.

Most parents are loving and fit, and thus shared parenting should not be discouraged, even through a well-intended resolution.

Sign your name

It is the sense of Congress that for the purpose of determining child custody, it is not in the best of children to:

- force parents to share custody over the objection of one or both parents where there is a history of domestic violence; or
- make “friendly parent” provisions a factor when there is abuse of one parent against another or a child.

### Stabenow Running for Senate

Rep. Debbie Stabenow (D-MI), a long time advisor to the CRC, is running for the Senate in Michigan this Fall. When she was a member of the state senate in Michigan, Stabenow strengthened the “Friend of the Court” provision to provide for expedited handling of access complaints.

**Children's Rights Council**  
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**for parents and professionals**

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V101 ----- \$25.00

**Don't Forget The Children**, by the Dallas, Texas Association of Young Lawyers. A CRC award-winning video that provides information on co-parenting in the event of divorce.

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**REPORTS**

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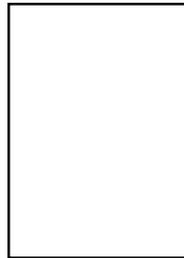
# 11 CRC Interns Have Productive Summer



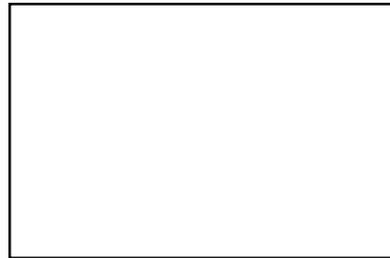
*(l to r) Randall, Carnright, Blackwell, Chavez, Clavecillas*



*(l to r) Bailey, Shark, Dorris, B. Gilmore and M. Gilmore*



*Maggiacomo*  
CRC Office Manager  
Helps Interns



*(l to r) Yang and Gianotti*

11 students from colleges all across the country signed up to be interns at CRC this summer.

Interns represent CRC on Capitol Hill, where they discuss family law legislation with Congressional staff, work on special projects like the press conference to present awards to 7 states (see elsewhere in this newsletter), assist in fundraising projects, help parents who call the office for help, monitor the courts, do research on children's needs, and other projects.

CRC has had about 200 college students over the years, some of whom sign up after seeing our year-round request for interns on our internet site, [www.gocrc.com](http://www.gocrc.com)

CRC also obtains interns from three different Washington based organizations, the Fund for American Studies, Washington Semester program, and American University's intern program, that enlist students from colleges.

Many students come to Washington every year; some sign up to work for a Congressman or work for a public service agency such as CRC. Some spend full time with CRC; others attend a few classes in addition to the unpaid internship.

This summer was the first time CRC had an intern from a service academy — Janee Gianotti, a cadet captain at the Air Force Academy in Colorado.

We had two law student interns, Melissa Dorris, University of Illinois Law School, and Stephanie Shark, Temple University Law School. They worked on legal issues for CRC.

Mike Gilmore, a student who is blind, attends the University of California at Davis. He interned with his brother Brian, who just graduated from high school.

Other summer interns:

- Carol Bailey, who graduated in June from the University of Washington;

- Tabitha Blackwell, a junior at Campbell University in North Carolina;
- Connie Yang, University of Pennsylvania.
- Amy Carnright, who enters her senior year at St. Joseph's University in Philadelphia;
- Jennifer Randall came to CRC straight from a semester of study and internship for a member of parliament in London: she is a junior at Notre Dame University in Indiana;
- Joy Clavecillas came to CRC after two years of study in Paris. She attends George Washington University in Washington, D.C.

CRC Office Manager Julie Maggiacomo, who has an M.A. in world politics, helped the interns.

## Maryland Can Use DNA to Challenge Support

From the Washington Post, July 2, 2000—Maryland's highest court has ruled that men who have legally acknowledged fathering a child can challenge those paternity agreements, even several years later. Judges who dissented from the court's opinion predicted that it could leave countless children "fatherless and without support."

The hotly debated 4 to 3 decision by the state Court of Appeals marks Maryland's entry into an area of law that is just now emerging across the country as more people gain access to DNA analysis, which can prove or disprove a child's parentage with almost 100 percent accuracy.

The judges ruled that blood or genetic tests that can determine paternity must be ordered if requested by the men.

The three dissenting judges and some child advocates criticized the ruling, which they said neglected to consider the "best interests of a child."

They said they fear it will inspire thousands of men to seek new tests in hopes of shirking long-standing child-support orders.



Kaiser

"What this opens up is a question of paternity in cases where it should have been resolved a long time ago," said Teresa Kaiser, executive director of the state Child Support Enforcement

Administration. "Many children who think they have a father may end up not having one."

But a majority of the court argued that fairness and truth are paramount over "best interests" in any paternity proceedings, whenever they take place.

"Simply stated, the fact of who the father of a child is cannot be changed by what might be in the best interest of the child," Judge Dale R. Cathell wrote for

the majority.

The decision stems from three cases involving two men and three children—now in or entering their teens—the men once acknowledged to have fathered.

A Talbot County man, identified only as Tyrone W., entered a paternity agreement with his ex-girlfriend after she gave birth in 1989. Though he did not request a blood test, he believed he had fathered her son, T.R., and agreed to pay child support.

But years later, the woman began dating another old boyfriend, and Tyrone testified that she implied to him that someone else might be the father. In 1998, he sought to overturn the old paternity agreement, but the local courts found that with no evidence of past fraud or error, he had waited too long to request new genetic tests of T.R., who was then 9.

## Grandparents Suffer Setback, But Still Have Rights



O'Connor

***O'Connor wrote opinion striking down Washington State law that "any person" can seek access of a child***

Grandparents suffered a legal setback, but have some rights to see their grandchildren, the U.S. Supreme Court decided on June 5, 2000.

The court found Washington State law, under which Jennifer and Gary Troxel had standing to seek court-ordered visitations with their grandchildren, to be unconstitutional.

By a 6-3 vote, the court invalidated Washington's broad law that gave "any person" standing to petition the court for visitation rights to children at any time. The court said that the parents have the constitutional right to determine the best manner in which to raise, nurture, and

educate their children without undue intervention by the state. This parental right is rooted in the Due Process Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment.

The Children's Rights Council strongly supports the right of parents to be primarily responsible for their children, but recognizes the unique contributions grandparents play in their grandchildren's lives.

This was the point we made on national media, including an appearance on the Today show by CRC President David L. Levy.

Some of the other points we made:

- \* Oftentimes, grandparents are on the "wrong side" of a custody battle, and get access cut off by the parent who wins custody. Grandparents and parents must make special efforts to get along for the sake of the child.
- \* Sometimes, parents are angry because grandparents won't buy them a new house or make other purchases. Grandparents, if you have the money, consider buying them the house.
- \* Try to stay out of court. Court is not friendly to children or families. Try to work things out amicably. If necessary, enlist the help of a minister, pastor or rabbi. If that doesn't work, obtain the services of a mediator. Court is the last resort.
- \* Under the Supreme Court ruling, even if a court grants grandparent visitation, they must now take into consideration the parents wishes more seriously than ever before. This will indeed make it more difficult for grandparents to see their grandchildren if the parents object.

## Background

### Overview of Grandparent Laws

All 50 states have grandparent visitation statutes, most of them allowing a

grandparent to petition a court for access during separation and divorce, but some allow grandparents to petition for access even for an intact marriage. Only 3 states (Washington, Alaska and Connecticut) allow “any person” to petition the court for access. During oral argument, Justice Antonin Scalia was concerned that a guitar teacher who is cut off from giving future lessons on the guitar to a child might petition the court to allow such access. (CRC Note: such cases are extremely rare).

The Minnesota statute that allows grandparents visitation if in the best interest of the child, while not interfering with the parent-child relationship, is an example of the more narrow verbiage in which many states constructed such laws. It was the broadness of Washington’s law that caused it to be scrutinized under the Fourteenth Amendment.

In one sense, the court’s ruling suggests that every family be treated in a similar fashion—as though there are “parents” to make decisions on who may have access to their children. The weakness in this belief falls where the ideal of nuclear families is addressed. The “nuclear family” has become an outdated stereotype. According to the U.S. Department of Commerce, in 1998, approximately 5.6%, or 4 million children under the age of 18, lived with their grandparents. In changing times, each instance must be addressed on a case by case basis, the court said.

## Implications for the Future

### Court Possibly Strengthens Shared Parenting Prospects

In the grandparents’ visitation case, the U.S. Supreme Court appeared to strengthen a long line of Supreme Court cases that uphold the right of parents to make decisions concerning their children.

In earlier cases, such as *Franz v. United States*, 707 F.2d 582, 601 (D.C. Cir. 1983), the Supreme Court recognized that “a parent’s right to the preser-

vation of his relationship with his child derives from the fact that the parent’s achievement of a rich and rewarding life is likely to depend significantly on his ability to participate in the rearing of his children. A child’s corresponding right to protection from interference in the relationship derives from the psychological importance of him being raised by a loving, responsible, reliable adult.”

Further, the Supreme Court long ago noted that a parent’s right to “the companionship, care, custody and management of his or her children” is an interest “far more precious” than any property right. *May v. Anderson*, 345 U.S. 528, 533, 73 S.Ct. 840, 843 (1952).

And, in *Lassiter v. Department of Social Services*, 452 U.S. 18, 27, 102 S.Ct. 2153, 2159-60 (1981), the Court stressed that the parent-child relationship “is an important interest that ‘undeniably warrants deference and, absent a powerful countervailing interest protection.’” quoting *Stanley v. Illinois*, 405 U.S. 645, 651, 92 S.Ct. 1208 (1972). The Court summarily announced the trend toward constitutional protection of the parent-child relationship in *Carson v. Elrod*, 411 F. Supp. 645, 649 (1976), stating “No bond is more precious and none should be more zealously protected by the law as the bond between parent and child.”

Properly evaluated and properly quoted in future cases brought before **any** court involving a custody determination, these statements and the future extension by the high court in the *Troxel* case can be cited to justify more shared parenting (joint custody).



*Oddenino*

### Raise Constitutional Arguments on the Trial Level

The quotes would have to be carefully used however, and they would be most useful in “clean” cases,

that is, in which there are two fit parents. In such cases, courts would ordinarily have a difficult time in choosing **which** parent should obtain custody. The an-

swer, of course, is that both parents (mom and dad) should share custody.

The high court’s language could also be used to justify greater involvement by both parents in visitation cases.

Note that the thrust of the decisions appear to justify joint legal custody, but one could argue that greater time spent with a child will naturally include more decision making when the child is with that parent.

Also note that the high court does not explicitly endorse joint custody, and some of the reference are to “parent” as in “parent’s decision.” So don’t assume that joint custody for **two** parents (which is growing in popularity) will suddenly be “easy” to get where it is not currently popular just because of the court’s decision.

It will take more education and information to the courts as to why the comments in court cases really do mean joint custody.

These are the comments in the *Troxel* case we are referring to:

“the interests of the parents in the care, custody, and control of their children is the oldest of the fundamental liberty interests recognized by this Court” (majority opinion by Justice Sandra Day O’Connor);

“The Due Process Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment protects the fundamental right of parents to make decision concerning the care, custody, and control of their children”;

As a constitutionally protected liberty interest, the Due Process Clause does not permit a state to interfere with the right of parents to make childrearing decisions “simply because a state judge believes a ‘better’ decision could be made; so long as a parent adequately cares for his or her children (i.e., is fit) there will normally be no reason for the State to inject itself into the private realm of the family to further question the ability of that parent to make decisions concerning the rearing of that parent’s children.”

(Editor’s note: under this reasoning, the state should automatically continue the shared parenting (joint custody) the parents would have had during a mar-

*Continued on page 26*

## Future Implications

*Continued from page 25*

riage, unless there is reason for the state to interfere to protect a child).

Justice O'Connor cited precedence to support the Court's decision that established as a cardinal rule that "the custody, care and nurture of the child reside first in the parents, whose primary function and freedom include preparation for obligations the state can neither supply, nor hinder."

Parents have a fundamental right to make decisions that affect their children, and, acting under the traditional presumption that parents act in the best interests of their children, should be allowed to control the custodial arrangement following separation or divorce.

CRC General Counsel Michael L. Oddenino recommends that constitutional arguments should be raised at the trial level, in order to protect them for possible appeal.

*For a copy of CRC's model joint custody brief, contact CRC. Free to members; \$10 to non-members for P/H.*



### The Year 2000 is CRC's 15th Anniversary

We appreciate everyone who has worked for children and CRC. We thank all those who have enabled CRC to improve the lives of children and families. So many have given so much, of their time, efforts, and financial contributions.

For the year 2000, CRC has three new levels of support of CRC. They are:

- \* A PLATINUM LIFE MEMBER is one who donates \$5,000 or more
- \* A GOLD LIFE MEMBER is one who donates \$2,500 to \$4,999.
- \* A SILVER LIFE MEMBER is one who donates \$1,000 to \$2,499.
- \* A LIFE MEMBER is one who donates CRC \$500 to \$999.

Anyone who has contributed to CRC in the past may increase the donation to reach any of the life member levels. If you are unsure about your previous donation level, contact CRC, and we would be glad to let you know. Thank you.

### Call for Poetry from Divorced Parents!

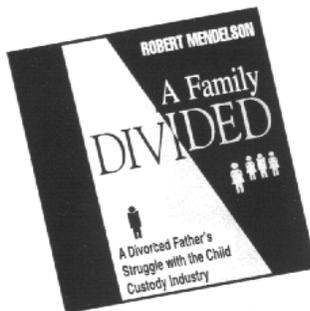
Mark Roseman, CRC Connecticut coordinator, is editing a volume of poetry for publication next year. Send submissions to Mark at 48 Shepards Knoll Drive, Hamden, CT. 06514 or email him at LIBROS3@aol.com

## THIS RIVETING EXPOSÉ REVEALS HOW JUDGES, ATTORNEYS, PSYCHIATRISTS AND PSYCHOLOGISTS VIOLATE LAW & ETHICS IN THEIR MISGUIDED ZEAL TO IDENTIFY A "PRIMARY PARENT"

One Divorced  
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Every Father's and  
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# Research

## Young Americans Affected by Divorce Rate, Want Sex, No Weddings

*Adapted from an article by Patrick Rizzo*

(Reuters, June, 2000)—Romance and marriage are out while casual sex and low-commitment relationships are in among young Americans, researchers have found.

"Today's singles scene is not oriented toward marriage, nor is it dedicated to romantic love as it has been in the past," said David Popenoe, co-director of the National Marriage project and a sociology professor at Rutgers in New Jersey.

To be sure, young Americans today did not invent the concept of "free love," such as existed during the 1960's. The difference, researchers said, is that young people today are more concerned with economic and sexual self-gratification than past generations.

"They don't really have pictures in their minds that the road they are walking along leads to having a family," said Barbara Dafoe Whitehead, co-author of the report with Popenoe.

The study gathered together "focus groups" of unmarried men and women age 21 to 29, in five major metropolitan areas—northern New Jersey, Atlanta, Dallas, Chicago and Los Angeles.

Most of the participants had some education beyond high school but not college degrees. The study was part of the project's second annual report on the

social health of marriage in the United States, "The State of Our Unions 2000."

Young people in America today, the study said, are more concerned with having fun and making money and less focused on forming lasting relationships that lead to marriage and raising a family.

The report took note that young Americans:

- favor living together as a try-out for marriage or as an alternative to marriage;
- have a fear of divorce;
- see marriage (and divorce) as a potential economic liability.

Oddly, however, most of the young men and women who participated in the study expected someday to meet and marry somebody who fulfilled their emotional and spiritual needs. The problem, researchers said, is that their current mercenary mating habits do not easily lead to the fulfillment of that goal.

### High Incidence of Divorce Among their Parents

Whitehead said the men and women in the study, because of the high incidence of divorce among their parents, did not count on having lasting relationships with each other. Instead, they fo-

cused more on themselves.

"There is a self-protective kind of response to what they see as the high incidence of divorce," she said.

One result of all this, the study said, is that many more young women see single motherhood, which was once taboo, as a viable option.

Although many women in their late twenties had been looking for more commitment than the men in the study, they too have become more disenchanted with the pool of prospective partners and the likelihood of finding a mate. Nearly half of the women in the study said they considered unwed motherhood a socially acceptable option if they could not find and marry the right man by their late thirties.

"We may be seeing a massive change that would mean that romantic love and courtship might be giving way to something altogether new. Or we may be in a period of cultural cluelessness," Whitehead said.

"Most societies have had a script and young adults have been guided through that script. And now the script is being so radically revised that nobody knows what it is anymore. Or people have torn it up," Whitehead said.

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### Mediation, Moveaway Help

Leslee Newman, J.D., who has been giving free consultations on move-away issues to CRC members, is available for mediation consultations (at a fee). Leslee, who is a trained mediator, can be reached at 714-282-1515. Her husband Don Smith, Ph.D., clinical psychologist, is available for child custody evaluations. Don's number is 714-939-6678.

Don and Leslee are both in Orange County, California, but can handle cases anywhere in the country.

### National Child's Day—June 4

The U.S. Senate unanimously passed a resolution declaring the first Sunday in June, as "National

Child's Day." National Children's Day is observed by many churches on the first Sunday in June. CRC and its chapters supported the observance on that date, which this year fell on June 4,

because it was nestled between Mother's Day and Father's Day, where a Children's Day ought to be!

It is unclear whether President Clinton issued a proclamation urging Americans to celebrate Child's Day on the first Sunday in June.

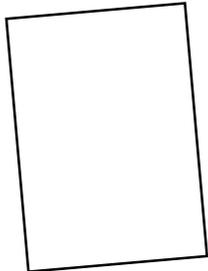
In the Congressional Record, May 24, 2000 issue, Graham thanked CRC for its efforts in helping to convince the Senate to pass the resolution.

*Graham*

### Dealing with Loss: Helping Your Children During and After Divorce

Dr. Herman Frankel, M.D.

Reviewed by CRC Staff



A 24-page guidebook. Individual copies \$5 to Children's Rights Council at 300 I Street NE, Suite 401, Washington, DC 20002-4389. For information about quantity

orders imprinted with the name of your program or agency, contact Dr. Frankel at Divorcework Center, 1800 SW First Avenue, Suite 510, Portland, OR 97201-5322.

Elizabeth Hickey, MSW, CRC's Director of Parenting Education, describes this as a "beautifully written booklet containing practical wisdom on how to help yourself and your children through the challenges of a family loss. I highly recommend it to parents, step-parents, and grandparents who are in the position of supporting children through change and loss."



Frankel

Dr. Frankel, M.D., Director of the Divorcework Center in Portland, Oregon and Adjunct Professor at Pacific University School of Professional Psychology, is a pediatrician whose

work is devoted to protecting children from harm during and after divorce. Doctor Frankel's extensive experience with children, parents, and professionals led him to write this publication, The booklet was awarded the Children's Rights Council's "1999 Kids First Award of Excellence" after Dr. Frankel spoke at CRC's 12th national conference.

To a child, divorce may be as traumatic as losing a loved one. The loss experienced by the child leads to grief and

mourning. Grieving a loss is a normal and healthy process, not a sign of illness. Children may experience such emotions as self-blame, withdrawal, anxiety, rage, loneliness, depression and more. They will experience a lack of familiarity and family stability due to the loss of ongoing contact with all of the family members.

Suddenly every-day routines will be changed and in many instances, the child might be placed in a new and unfamiliar neighborhood and school. Hence, their support base of friends is no longer near. As a result, parents may witness a decline in their child's academic performance as well. Although a trying experience, it is important to remember that children as well as adults have the capacity to recover from divorce and be able to create a new chapter in their lives.

Dr. Frankel guides us through the four categories of grief work done, repeatedly, by children (and parents) who deal effectively with the devastation of divorce and, in the process, become stronger, wiser, healthier, and more loving. He reminds us that divorce ends the marriage; it does not end the family.

He shows us how to support our children in their efforts to understand what they are losing, to experience and honor the emotions triggered by the loss, to live in the present as they take effective action to memorialize the losses and the life transition they have experienced, and to address, in their own ways, the question, "What really matters to me and to my family?"

It is also important that parents attend to their children's needs and remain dedicated to their healing process. One basic concept to remember is that when parents divorce, children want and need to accomplish these tasks in their own way and at their own pace. To guide parents in supporting their children's

healing process during and after a divorce, Dr. Frankel goes on to offer thirty practical suggestions. The first 10 of them are:

1. Remember that your child is not your parent. Do not look to your children to fill that loss and need for nurturing, but rather, remember that you must continue to nurture them.
2. Remember that your child is not your partner.
3. Remember that your child is not your friend. When you need someone to talk to, and your partner is no longer there, remember that you are the parent not the pal, and do not overlap these roles.
4. Remember that your child is not your representative. Your attorney can help you maintain appropriate communication. Do not use your child as a messenger.
5. Take the initiative. Tell your children what is happening.
6. Decide on the purpose of the conversation. Tell your children what they need to know, ask if they have any questions, ensure them that it is not their fault and of your continued love for them.
7. Decide on the structure of the "telling the children" conversation. Keep the conversation preferable short, but slow. After the conversation, transition to an activity other than bedtime.
8. Expect to answer the children's questions repeatedly, on their schedule. Children grieve and re-grieve.
9. When you don't know, say, "I don't know."
10. Make sure the children understand that their actions will not affect the permanence of the divorce.

# Talking Back to Ritalin

## What Doctors Aren't Telling You about Stimulants for Children

Peter R. Breggin, M.D.,  
Available from CRC

Reviewed by CRC Staff

400 pages, hard-  
back, \$25, website:  
**h t t p : / /**  
**www.agate.net~comcour**  
**e - m a i l :**  
**comcour1@agate.net**

CRC is reporting on this subject because many parents get “pushed away” and “forced away” from their children during the divorce process, so they are unable to provide the “on

Breggin

site” parenting that might provide alternatives other than drugs for their children. Dr. Breggin was a speaker at CRC's 12th national conference in September, 1999

Studies show that the use of stimulants such as Ritalin and antidepressants are on the rise among toddlers. According to a study from the University of Maryland, School of Pharmacy, as many as 1.5 percent of children age 2 to 4 are receiving these drugs. The doctors are finding a quick and easy solution for a much deeper issue. In the February 23, 2000 issue of *The Washington Post*, Joseph T. Coyle of the Harvard Medical School in Boston sharply criticized the growing use of stimulants and antidepressant drugs in preschool-age children. This age “is a time of extraordi-

nary, unprecedented changes in the brain... We have very little information about the long-term impact of treatment with these drugs.”

Breggin's book demonstrates the negative effects of Ritalin on toddlers. His book highlights why the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) is worried about the number of children taking Ritalin, the negative side effects of Ritalin, how children feel about Ritalin, and the empowerment of parents in relationships with children.

The DEA has issued warnings about the rates of Ritalin prescriptions in this country. Questioning the tactics of Ritalin's manufacturer, the DEA raises concern over the safety and efficacy of the drug. The DEA (1996) has made it clear that there is no known biological cause for Attention Deficit-Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD).

The DEA also warns that Ritalin use “may be a risk factor for substance abuse” and “further provides a comprehensive list of adverse effects”.

Without any actual physical test being able to detect the supposed existence of ADHD, three basic categories are used to diagnose ADHD. The characteristics of a suspected ADHD child are hyperactivity, impulsivity, and attention problems.

According to Dr. Breggin, many of these same children are accused of day-dreaming in class, keeping a messy desk, being excessively jittery or jumpy, trouble

listening and complying to adult expectations. How many of us suffered from these ailments as children? While extreme cases of rambunctious children in the classroom do exist, Ritalin should not be used as an easy solution to a more complex issue.

When questioned as to the harmful effects of Ritalin, a leading advocate of Ritalin has made the comment that other than “headaches, sleepiness in some people, lack of desire to eat,” all other adverse effects are “remote”. Dr. Breggin on the other hand emphasizes Ritalin's adverse effects on the brain, behavior, and mental life. Other side effects include: “subtle social withdrawal; dulled affect, emotional blunting; cognitive ‘overfocusing’; mild to moderate depression in children.” These are devastating side effects that none of us should wish to subject our children to.

Children, just like adults, have stressors in their lives. Such stressors might include such things as the death of a pet, arguments or separation of their parents, conflict with teachers, unsafe neighborhoods, poverty and more. In order to fix a problem, one must first realize what the problem is. There is no proof that Ritalin cures ADHD, as may have long-term negative side effects.

For more information on Dr. Breggin's work go to [www.breggin.com](http://www.breggin.com) and [www.icspp.org](http://www.icspp.org)

### National Cry for Children

Rally Saturday, November 4 at the Lincoln Memorial. Contact organizer Brad Ingram at [mvacon5@juno.com](mailto:mvacon5@juno.com)

Like last year's Cry for Children rally, this year's events, says Ingram,

will again emphasize that “entire generations are growing up not knowing the importance of families. They are learning that two cars in the garage is more important than two parents in the home.

This is not a fathers rights rally. This is a family rally.”

David L. Levy is among those invited to speak at the rally.

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website only: http://www/motherswithoutcustody.org

### Stepfamily Association of America (SAA)

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