

PARENT EDUCATION PROGRAMS

If you are filing for a divorce, in which there are minor children, you are required to attend a Parent Education Program.

Please take a moment to read Standing Order 1-03, Parent Education Program Attendance, mandated by the Chief Justice of the Probate and Family Court.

A comprehensive list of Approved Program Providers from the Probate and Family Court, Administrative Office is provided for your information.

For a Program Provider closest to you, please look at the list of towns that are included for your benefit.

New Standing Order 1-03, Effective August 1, 2003, regarding Parent Education Program Attendance.

This court finds that the interests of the minor children of parties appearing before it would be well served by educating their parents about children's emotional needs and the effects of divorce on child behavior and development.

IT IS HEREBY ORDERED THAT:

1. All parties to a divorce action in which there are minor children, are ordered to attend and participate in an approved Parent Education Program (hereinafter, program) except as herein provided. This requirement applies to divorces under Chapter 208, Section 1 (fault divorces); and Chapter 208, Sections 1A and 1B (irretrievable breakdown) and as ordered by a judge of this court in an action to establish paternity, complaints for modification or contempt or in any case involving visitation, custody, or support of minor children.

2. Attendance at an approved program is mandatory for parties to such actions unless waived by the court. Parties must register with an approved provider within sixty days (60) days of service of the original complaint upon the original defendant and attend the next available session.

3. No Pre-Trial Conference or Trial will be held by the Court until the court receives a certificate of attendance from an approved program for each party, or waives the requirement. An uncontested divorce hearing may be scheduled pending attendance if the parties file confirmations of the registration with the court and so long as both parties complete the program prior to the hearing. A Pre-Trial Conference in a contested case may be similarly scheduled so long as the parties complete the program prior to the Pre-Trial Conference.

4. The court may waive the attendance requirement upon motion, with notice, for one or both parties. Waivers will only be granted upon a demonstrable showing of chronic and severe violence which negates safe parental communication; language barriers; institutionalization or other unavailability of a party; failure of the other party to complete a program; unavailability of an approved program in the county in which the original divorce brought under Chapter 208, Section 1 and Chapter 208, Sections 1A and 1B was filed; or where justice otherwise indicates.

5. Sanctions for failure to register with an approved program within sixty (60) days of service of the original complaint upon the original defendant may be imposed by the court.

6. The parties must attend programs approved by the Chief Justice of the Probate & Family Court. Attendance at an approved program, wherever held within the Commonwealth, is permissible. Programs which are not approved by the Chief Justice will not satisfy the attendance requirement. Program vendors will ensure that parties to an action do not attend the same session of any program. Lists of approved programs shall be available at all Registries of Probate and at

<http://www.state.ma.us/courts/courtsandjudges/courts/probateandfamilycourt/selfhelp.html>

7. A pamphlet entitled Parent Education Programs: Understanding the Effect of Divorce on Children, which lists the approved program providers shall be given to the plaintiff or his/her attorney upon the filing of a complaint for divorce involving minor children. The plaintiff or his/her attorney shall serve a copy of said pamphlet along with the complaint and summons to the person authorized to make service pursuant to Mass.R.Dom.Rel.P. 4(c).

8. The parties shall each pay \$65.00 to the provider in advance of the program to offset the cost of materials and facilitators.

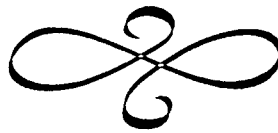
9. A party may pay a reduced fee of \$5.00 to the provider if the party has submitted and had allowed an "Affidavit of Indigency and Request for Waiver, Substitution or State Payment of Fees and Costs." This form is prescribed by the Chief Justice of the Supreme Judicial Court pursuant to G.L. Chapter 261, Section 27B, promulgated March, 2003 and is available at the Registry of Probate and Family Court. The party must submit a copy of this form to the provider when registering for a program at a reduced fee of \$5.00.

10. Nothing herein shall be construed to limit the authority of any Probate and Family Court justice in order for parties to attend an approved program in any case involving visitation, custody, or support of minor children.

11. All information submitted in compliance with the research component of the program shall be the work product of the Probate and Family Court Administrative Office. The material is for research purposes only and shall not be discoverable.

**PARENT
EDUCATION
PROGRAMS**

***Understanding the Effect of
Divorce on Children***



**PROBATE AND FAMILY COURT
ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE**

**Two Center Plaza
Boston, MA 02108**

<http://www.mass.gov/courts>

**Commonwealth of Massachusetts
The Trial Court
Probate and Family Court Department**

**STANDING ORDER 1-03
PARENT EDUCATION PROGRAM ATTENDANCE**

This court finds that the interests of the minor children of parties appearing before it would be well served by educating their parents about children's emotional needs and the effects of divorce on child behavior and development.

IT IS HEREBY ORDERED THAT:

1. All parties to a divorce action in which there are minor children, are ordered to attend and participate in an approved Parent Education Program (hereinafter, program) except as herein provided. This requirement applies to divorces brought under Ch. 208 sec. 1 (fault divorces); and Ch. 208 secs. 1A and 1B (irretrievable breakdown) and as ordered by a judge of this court in an action to establish paternity, complaints for modification or contempt or in any case involving visitation, custody, or support of minor children.
2. Attendance at an approved program is mandatory for parties to such actions unless waived by the court. Parties must register with an approved provider within sixty (60) days of service of the original complaint upon the original defendant and attend the next available session.
3. No Pre-trial Conference or Trial will be held by the court until the court receives a certificate of attendance from an approved program for each party, or waives the requirement. An uncontested divorce hearing may be scheduled pending attendance if the parties file confirmations of registration with the court and so long as both parties complete the program prior to the hearing. A Pre-trial Conference in a contested case may be similarly scheduled so long as both parties complete the program prior to the Pre-Trial Conference.
4. The court may waive the attendance requirement upon motion, with notice, for one or both parties. Waivers will only be granted upon a demonstrable showing of chronic and severe violence which negates safe parental communication; language barriers; institutionalization or other unavailability of a party; failure of the other party to complete a program; unavailability of an approved program in the county in which the original divorce brought under Ch. 208 sec. 1 and Ch. 208 secs. 1A and 1B was filed; or where justice otherwise indicates.
5. Sanctions for failure to register with an approved program within sixty (60) days of service of the original complaint upon the original defendant may be imposed by the court.
6. The parties must attend programs approved by the Chief Justice of the Probate and Family Court. Attendance at an approved program, wherever held within the Commonwealth, is permissible. Programs which are not approved by the Chief Justice will not satisfy the attendance requirement. Program vendors will ensure that parties to an action do not attend the same session of any program. Lists of approved programs shall be available at all Registries of Probate and at <http://www.state.ma.us/courts/courtsandjudges/courts/probateandfamilycourt/selfhelp.html>
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10. Nothing herein shall be construed to limit the authority of any Probate and Family Court justice to order parties to attend an approved program in any case involving visitation, custody, or support of minor children.
11. All information submitted in compliance with the research component of the program shall be the work product of the Probate and Family Court Administrative Office. The material is for research purposes only and shall not be discoverable.

August, 2003

Sean M. Dunphy, Chief Justice

Revised: September, 2006

Approved Program Providers

*All programs are 2 sessions of 2 ½ hrs each unless noted otherwise

** Program also offered in Spanish

ACTON

Changing Families, Changing Times, Boundaries Therapy Center, 518 Great Rd., (978) 263-4878, Contact: Helen Frey, Website: www.divorcenter.org

AGAWAM

Parents, Children & Divorce, Behavioral Health Network, Agawam Counseling Center, 30 Southwick St., P.O. Box 84, Feeding Hills (413) 786-6410, Contact: Coordinator

ATTLEBORO

*Family Service Assoc. of Greater Fall River, Inc., Arbour Fuller Hospital, 200 May St., (508) 678-7542, Contact: Family Service Department, Website: www.divorcingparents.com
[2 sessions of 3 hours each]

BEVERLY

**PEACE, North Shore Counseling Center, 23 Broadway, (978) 922-2280, Contact: Linda Migdole
Spanish language program, (978) 922-3605, Website: www.nscppsyc.com

BILLERICA

Divorce and Its Impact on Children's Development, Perspectives, 7 Concord Road, (978) 745-7808,
Contact: Madeline Segal

BOSTON

Parents Apart, Charis Institute, Inc., Massachusetts General Hospital, 15 Parkman St., (978) 774-1411, x501, Contact: Steven Nisenbaum

BRAINTREE

Parents Apart, Divorce Center, Inc., Braintree Health South Hospital, (888) 434-8787,
Contact: David Seaquist, Website: www.divorcenter.org

BROCKTON

*Set A Good Example (SAGE), MSPCC, 231 Main Street, 3rd floor, (800) 339-2204,
Contact: James Kenney [2 sessions; First 2 hours, Second 3 hours].

Parents Apart, Mass Bay Counseling, Massasoit Community College, (617) 786-3027,
Contact: Karen Jones

BROOKLINE

For the Sake of the Children, Center for Families in Transition, 1419 Beacon St., (617) 489-2922, Contact: Stuart Andrews or Elke Schlager

Parenting Through Divorce: Supporting the Child, Boston Graduate School of Psychoanalysis, 1581 Beacon Street, (617) 277-3915, Contact: Maureen K. Ryan, Website: www.bgpsp.edu

CAMBRIDGE

For the Sake of the Children, Center for Families in Transition, YWCA, 7 Temple St., (617) 489-2922, Contact: Stuart Andrews or Elke Schlager

CHELMSFORD

Moving Forward, Life Transitions, Inc. 10 Billerica Road, (978) 649-6255, Contact: Robert DiMeo, Website: www.lifetransitionsinc.net

CHICOPEE

Parents Apart, Elm's College, Berchmans Hall, 291 Springfield Street, (413) 528-3508, Contact: Judith Haggerty

DANVERS

Parents Apart, Charis Institute, Inc., Calvary Episcopal Church, Cherry St., (978) 774-1411, x502, Contact: Paul Bombara

FALL RIVER

*Family Service Assoc. of Greater Fall River, Inc., 151 Rock St., (508) 678-7542,
Contact: Family Service Department, Website: www.divorcingparents.com [2 sessions of 3 hours each]

*Set A Good Example (SAGE), MSPCC, 46 North Main St., (800) 339-2204,
Contact: James Kenney [2 sessions, First session 2 hours, Second session 3 hours]

FITCHBURG

*****Reducing the Effects of Divorce, Children's Aid & Family Service, United Way of Central Mass., 915 South St., (978) 345-4147, Contact: Family Counseling Center***

FRAMINGHAM

Consider the Children, Divorce Education, Inc., Mass Bay Community College, 19 Flagg Drive, (508) 435-4745, Contact: Diane Ferkler or Samuel Chiancola

GARDNER

Reducing the Effects of Divorce, Children's Aid & Family Service, Colonial Bed, Breakfast & Conference Ctr., 625 Betty Spring Rd., (978) 345-4147, Contact: Family Counseling Center

GREAT BARRINGTON

Parents Apart, Great Barrington Police Station, (413) 528-3508, Contact: Judith Haggerty

GREENFIELD

Families in Transition (FIT), Franklin County Bar Association, Berkshire Community College, (413) 773-9839, Contact: Mimi Gordon

GROTON

Reducing the Effects of Divorce, Children's Aid & Family Service, First Parish Unitarian Church, Rt. 119, (978) 345-4147

HANOVER

Parents Apart, Marvista Psychological Associates, PC, South Shore Vocational High School, (781) 383-0860, Contact: Selma Ingber or Charles Mundhenk, Website: www.divorcenter.org

HAVERHILL

Positive Co-Parenting in Difficult Times, Psychotherapy Associates of North Reading, Northern Essex Community College, (978) 664-2566, ext. 5 Contact: Dr. Donna Whipple, Website: www.panr.net

HYANNIS

****Set A Good Example (SAGE), MSPCC, 206 Breeds Hill Road, (800) 339-2204, Contact: James Kenney [2 sessions; First 2 hours, Second 3 hours]***

LAWRENCE

*****Divorce & Its Impact on Children's Development, Perspectives, Northern Essex Community College, 45 Franklin Street, (978) 745-7808, Contact: Madeline Segal***

LEXINGTON

Parents Apart, Charis Institute, Inc., 3 Militia Dr., (781) 863-0350, x503, Contact: Daniel Verrengia

LITTLETON

Moving Forward, Life Transitions, Inc., 461 King St., (978) 649-6255, Contact: Robert DiMeo, Website: www.lifetransitionsinc.net

LOWELL

Divorce & Its Impact on Children's Development, Perspectives, 15 Mammoth Road (978) 745-7808, Contact: Madeline Segal

LYNN

Divorce and Its Impact on Children's Development, Perspectives, Atlantic Care Medical Center, (978) 745-7808, Contact: Madeline Segal

Understanding the Effect of Divorce on Children, Family & Children's Service of Greater Lynn, Inc., 111 North Common St., (781) 598-5517, Contact: Linda Demerjian

MARLBOROUGH

Consider the Children, Divorce Education Inc., Relationship Institute, 431 Bolton Street, (508) 435-4745, Contact: Diane Ferkler or Samuel Chiancola

MARSHFIELD

Parents Apart, Mass Bay Counseling, Marshfield High School, 89 Forest St., (617) 786-3027, Contact: Karen Jones

MEDFORD

Positive Co-Parenting in Difficult Times, Psychotherapy Associates of North Reading, Medford High School, 489 Winthrop St., (978) 664-2566, ext. 5 Contact: Dr. Donna Whipple, Website: www.panr.net

MELROSE

Divorce and Its Impact on Children's Development, Perspectives, 355 Franklin St., (978) 745-7808, Contact: Madeline Segal

MILFORD

Consider the Children, Divorce Education, Inc., Milford High School, 31 West Fountain St., (508) 435-4745 or (508) 473-4674, Contact: Diane Ferkler or Samuel Chiancola

NEEDHAM

Focusing on Our Children, Divorce Education Services, Deaconess-Glover Hospital, 148 Chestnut St., (781) 237-5064, Contact: Ann Steele

NEW BEDFORD

*Family Service Association of Greater Fall River, Inc., Fisher College, 777 Church St. (508) 678-7542, Contact: Sue Rogue, Website: www.divorcingparents.com [2 sessions of 3 hours each]

*Set A Good Example (SAGE), MSPCC, 558 Pleasant St., (800) 339-2204, Contact: James Kenney [2 sessions; First 2 hours, Second 3 hours]

NEWBURYPORT

Parents Apart, Charis Institute Inc., Nock Middle School, (978) 774-1411, x505, Contact: Gerry Elliott

NORTH ANDOVER

Putting Children First, Family Service, Inc., Merrimack College, (978) 683-9505, Contact: Intake Worker

NORTH DIGHTON

Family Service Association of Greater Fall River, Inc., St. Joseph's Parish Hall, Spring St., (508) 678-7542, Contact: Sue Rogue, Website: www.divorcingparents.com

NORTH READING

Positive Co-Parenting in Difficult Times, Psychotherapy Assoc. of North Reading, 324 Main St. (Rt. 28), and Barberry Road, (978) 664-2566, ext. 5 Contact: Dr. Donna Whipple, Website: www.panr.net

NORTHAMPTON

Parents and Children in Transition (PACT), Hampshire County Bar Association, Hall of Records Community Room, 33 King St., (413) 586-4597, Contact: Rebecca Ryan

NORWOOD

Parents Apart, Child & Family Psychological Services, Inc., Norwood Junior High School, (781) 551-0999, Contact: Coordinator, Website: www.cfpsych.org

Focusing on our Children, Divorce Education Services, Norwood Hospital, (781) 237-5064, Contact: Ann Steele

PITTSFIELD

Families in Transition, Family Center of the Berkshires, 741 North St., and 333 East St., (413) 447-2142, Contact: Patrick Fleming

PLYMOUTH

Parents Apart, Marvista Psychological Associates, PC, Plymouth North High School, (781) 383-0860, Contact: Selma Ingber or Charles Mundhenk

QUINCY

Parents Apart, Mass Bay Counseling, 5 Hollis Ave., Greater Quincy Knights of Columbus (617) 786-3027, Contact: Karen Jones

SALEM

Divorce & Its Impact on Children's Development, Perspectives, 13 Hawthorne Blvd., (978) 745-7808, Contact: Madeline Segal

SANDWICH

For the Sake of the Children, Center for Families in Transition, 142 Main St., (617) 489-2922
Contact: Stuart Andrews

SOUTHBRIDGE

Parents Apart, George B. Wells Human Service Center, Harrington Memorial Hospital, 29 Pine St., (508) 765-9167, Contact: Coordinator

SPRINGFIELD

Parents, Children and Divorce Program, Behavioral Health Network, Child Guidance Clinic, 110 Maple St., (413) 732-7419, Contact: Coordinator

Parents & Children in Divorce, Child and Family Service of Pioneer Valley, Inc., Baystate Medical Center, 759 Chestnut Street, (413) 737-4718, Contact: Coordinator, Website: www.cfs.org

TAUNTON

*Family Service Association of Greater Fall River, Inc., 176 Somerset Ave., (508) 678-7542,
Contact: Family Service Department, Website: www.divorcingparents.com [2 sessions of 3 hours each]

WAKEFIELD

Partners for Positive Co-Parenting, Riverside Community Care, 338 Main Street, Suite 304, (781) 246-2010, Contact: Coordinator

WALTHAM

Parents Apart, Divorce Center, Inc., 84 South St., (888) 434-8787, Contact: David Seaquist,
Website: www.divorcenter.org

WARE

Parents and Children in Divorce, Child & Family Services of Pioneer Valley, Mary Lane Hospital, 85 South St., (800) 232-0510, Contact: Coordinator, Website: www.cfs.org

WAREHAM

Parents Helping Children Through Divorce, Psychology Associates, Wareham High School, (508) 747-2718, Contact: Debbie Bell

WATERTOWN

Families Divided, Divorcestep, 80 Mount Auburn Street, (508) 358-7688, www.divorcestep.com

WEST BARNSTABLE

Parents Apart, Mass Bay Counseling, Cape Cod Community College, Rt. 132, (617) 786-3027,
Contact: Karen Jones

WEST SPRINGFIELD

Parents Apart, Parents in Cooperation, Brightside Center for Families and Children, 2112 Riverdale Rd., (413) 735-1719, Contact: Barry Krinsky

Parents & Children in Divorce, Child & Family Service of Pioneer Valley, 425 Union St., Level D, (413) 737-4718, Contact: Coordinator, Website: www.cfs.org

WEST TISBURY

Parents Apart of Martha's Vineyard, Martha's Vineyard Community Services, First Congregational Church, (508) 693-7900,
Contact: Coordinator

WESTBOROUGH

Divorce that Works for Children, Active Counseling Associates, 43 Hopkinton Road, (508) 366-7557, Contact: Sylvia Sirignano

WORCESTER

Parents Apart, University of Mass. Medical Center, 55 Lake Ave. North, Room S5-100A, (508) 856-8600, Contact: Nancy Perkins

**Children Cope with Divorce*, Jewish Family Service of Worcester, 646 Salisbury St., (508) 755-3101, Contact: Zelda Schwartz, Website: www.jfsworcester.org [2 sessions of 3 hours each]

Parents Apart, Family Services of Central Massachusetts, 31 Harvard St., (508) 756-4646,
Contact: Intake Department, Website: www.fscm.org

Consider the Children, Divorce Education, Inc., 6 Melville Street, (508) 435-4745,
Contact: Diane Ferkler