

# CENTER ON FATHERING

## Fathering is For Life

1675 Garden of the Gods  
Colorado Springs, CO 80907  
Phone: 719-634-7797  
Email: [DHSCenteronFathering@elpasoco.com](mailto:DHSCenteronFathering@elpasoco.com)  
Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/fatheringisforlife/>  
<https://humanservices.elpasoco.com/center-on-fathering/>



## Center on Fathering Monthly Newsletter---June 2022

# HAPPY FATHERS DAY!!

## From the staff of the Center on Fathering.

### Single Parenting Versus Shared Parenting-A Shared Parenting Report Card-National Parents Organization 2019 Shared Parenting Report Card



Shared parenting is when parents share equally in decision-making around their children. It's not the same as joint custody. Although the two terms are certainly related, joint custody is a legal arrangement in which parents make legal decisions around their children. Shared parenting refers to all decisions. It can involve joint custody but can exist in the absence of it, such as when a divorcing or never-married couple agrees to share in decision making legal and

otherwise and with or without the help of a third party (e.g., a mediator). In the 2019 Shared Parenting Report Card, the National Parenting Organization gives each state a grade (A-F) on the evaluation of states' statutory provisions promoting shared parenting.

Extensive research going back more than a quarter century has found that the 35% of children in fatherless or single parent families not only fare worse in terms of psychological and emotional

well-being, physical and mental health, labor market and wealth accumulation outcomes, but are more prone to social pathologies such as child abuse, crime, and substance abuse. These children represent:

- 63% of teen suicides
- 70% of juveniles in state-operated institutions
- 71% of high school dropouts;
- 75% of children in chemical abuse centers
- 85% of those in prison;
- 85% of children who exhibit behavioral disorders; and
- 90% of homeless and runaway children.
- 85% of teen pregnancies

The societal cost of fatherlessness and single-parent families has been conservatively estimated at \$100 billion annually. When two fit parents are willing to act as parents, keeping them both involved equally in the raising of their children is not only good for the children, but also social and economic policy. Shared parenting following divorce/separation has been consistently shown to produce better child outcomes than sole custody arrangements along multiple dimensions: academic or cognitive outcomes, emotional and psychological outcomes including depression, stress and self-esteem factors, behavioral problems including substance abuse, physical and mental health, and improved parent-child relationships. For parents, shared parenting is significantly correlated with increased child support compliance and reduced parental conflict and domestic violence. Shared parenting allows both parents to pursue their careers, social lives and other interests without the burden of single-handedly raising a child.

### **Social Science Consensus**

The social science community has embraced shared parenting in increasingly stronger terms in recent years culminating in a recommendation for the adoption of a rebuttable legal presumption of shared parenting:

**2013:** The Association of Family and Conciliation Courts (AFCC) published the recommendations of 32 family law experts. The group concluded, “Children’s best interests are furthered by parenting plans that provide for continuing and shared parenting relationships that are safe, secure, and developmentally responsive and that also avoid a template calling for a specific division of time imposed on all families”. While these experts hedged their conclusions with many caveats and qualifications, they nevertheless stated that, “considered as a body of work, the efficacy of shared parenting has been supported for children of preschool age and older.” They also stated, “Parents who choose these arrangements [shared parenting] have reported that their children are better adjusted across multiple measures than their sole-custody or stepfamily peers”.

**2014:** Endorsed by 110 international experts, the “Warshak Consensus” paper concluded that “shared parenting should be the norm for parenting plans for children of all ages, including young children recognizing that some parents and situations are unsuitable for shared parenting”.

**2018:** Following the 2017 International Conference on Shared Parenting, 12 international experts published a paper stating: “The evidence is now sufficiently deep and consistent to permit social scientists to provisionally recommend presumptive shared parenting to policy makers ... these statements are explicitly made guardedly ... We might aptly characterize the current state of the evidence as “the preponderance of the evidence” (i.e., substantially more evidence for the presumption than against it). A great many studies, with various inferential strengths, suggest that shared parenting will bestow benefits on children on average, and few if any studies show that it harms them”.

**2019:** Research soon to be published in the Oxford Handbook of Children and the Law provides compelling evidence that it is not only when parents agree to shared parenting that this parenting arrangement is in children’s best interest. The research shows that “a legal presumption of equal parenting time is in children’s best interest, because such a presumption is likely to strengthen the emotional security of children of divorced and separated parents and thereby have a widespread positive impact on public health”.

### **Legislative Changes Since 2014**

Shared parenting has been a hot legislative topic following the inaugural 2014 National Parents Organization Report Card. There have been 180 shared parenting bills introduced during the past five years, tripling from 16 in 11 states in 2014 to a high of 48 in 30 states in 2017, and with 48 to date in 27 states in 2019. Of those, 13 bills in nine states have been signed into law: Florida, Kentucky, Minnesota, Missouri, Nevada, Oregon, South Dakota, Utah and Virginia. The following milestones summarize the progress made in the adoption of shared parenting nationally:

Kentucky becomes the first state to implement an explicit rebuttable presumption of joint legal custody and equal physical custody for both temporary (pendente lite) and final orders, becoming the first state to achieve an ‘A’ grade as well as being the most improved state in terms of grade rankings.

Arizona courts interpret maximum parenting time provisions of 2013 legislation as equivalent to an implicit presumption of equal physical custody. This might have an important persuasive ripple effect in states that have adopted similar wording. With a rating of A-, Arizona becomes only the second state to achieve an ‘A’ grade.

The average state grade of ‘D+’ in the 2014 Report Card has risen to ‘C-’ in 2019, symbolizing a breakthrough to the next level in the growing adoption of shared parenting as the norm in the US. Based on a grade of ‘C’ to minimally qualify as a “shared parenting state”, the number of shared parenting states has risen from 26 in 2014 to 35 in 2019.

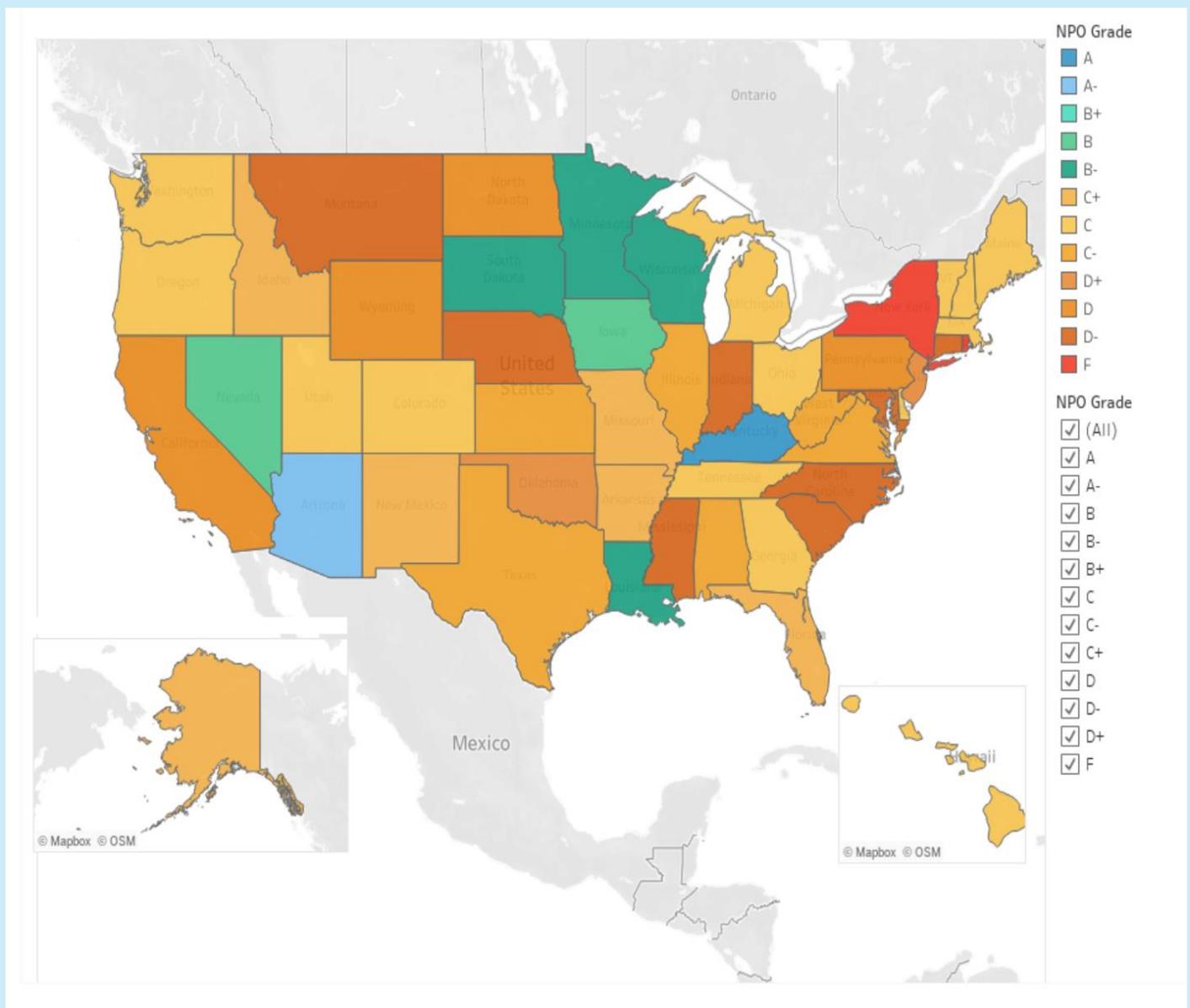
The 9 states with legislative changes since 2014 advanced from an average grade of D+ to B-. Six states increased their grade; two states saw no change (Missouri, South Dakota), and one state had a minor decrease (Minnesota). As noted in the following section, changes were made to the grading criteria for 2019 so that the 2014 and 2019 grades are roughly, but not precisely, comparable in all cases.

The top five most improved states since the inaugural 2014 analysis are: Kentucky, Nevada, Arkansas, Arizona and Virginia. The changes result from either: new legislation, favorable

jurisprudential interpretation, or rescoring under the expanded 2019 criteria. The legislative changes that improved the scores of three of these states were spearheaded by leaders of National Parents Organization: Matt Hale (Kentucky), Christian Paasch (Virginia), and Dan Deuel (Utah). Arizona State University professor William Fabricius was the driving force behind Arizona's improvements. Nevada attorney and State Senator Keith Pickard is responsible for pressing the changes in Nevada. Finally, Wisconsin Fathers for Children and Families was a key force in the improvements in Wisconsin's statutes.

The states with the most shared parenting bills introduced during the period 2014 -2019 are: Missouri – 12, New York – 11, Minnesota – 10, Massachusetts- 10, Iowa – 9 and West Virginia – 94. Based on historical legislative activity, these can be viewed as shared parenting battleground states.

The least active shared parenting states with no shared parenting bills introduced in the past 5 years are: Delaware, Georgia, Ohio and Rhode Island.



# MONTHLY ACTIVITIES (free)



**Free Fishing Weekend**-June 4 to June 5, 2022. The fish are starting to bite at waters all around the state. To give everyone an opportunity to get out and get some hits, Colorado Parks and Wildlife is inviting resident and nonresident anglers of all ages to participate in its annual Free Fishing Weekend on June 4 to 5. The free fishing weekend is a great way to get outside with family and friends and take advantage of Colorado's extensive opportunities to fish for a myriad of cold and warm water fish species.

**A FAMILY FUN DAY OUT!**  
**Free Entrance**  
**Starts At:**  
**11:00AM - 6:00PM**  
**SATURDAY**  
**11 June 2022**  
Local Food - Shopping  
- Music - Food Trucks  
- Games -  
Entertainment- And  
Much More  
Memorial Park (FireFighter Memorial )

**Family Fun Day**-June 11, 11-to 6 pm at Memorial Park (Firefighter side). This is a free event for the community filled with lots of entertainment from your finest local bands and dance groups, shopping, resources from community agencies, delicious foods/treats from Colorado Spring's best food trucks, and lots of fun for all age groups. **WE WILL HAVE HOURLY GIVEAWAYS.** Our big attractions will include a car show, an all-day stepathon, a petting zoo, free haircuts, 360 photo booth with props,

face painting, bounce houses, crafts to take home, and more! Alongside our big attractions, we will be offering limited free haircuts to the community.



**Score a Hole-In-One Kids Workshop**-June 18<sup>th</sup>. Take a swing at family fun with your mini DIYer! This month, build a special hand-made gift for Father's Day. Everyone scores with this miniature Putting Green Kit built in the Kids Workshop. Bring your mini-DIYer into Lowe's at one of the select time slots. Workshops hosted by one our Red Vest experts are held from 9:00am – 12:00pm, in-store only. We look forward to building with you and your little ones! Don't forget – if you are unable to attend during your selected timeslot, your kit may be given away to Walk-Ins starting at 12:00pm, the day of the workshop.

# WHAT'S NEW?

## Celebrate the Day Before Father's Day with Free Switchback Tickets



Enjoy the day before Father's Day with your family by watching the Switchbacks play the Indy Eleven on Saturday, June 18, 7:00 pm. The Center is offering four free tickets per family. You must redeem your tickets by June 3rd, or they will be given to another family. Contact the Center on Fathering at (719) 634-7797 to reserve your tickets.

## Army recognizes Fort Carson and El Paso County DHS for Outstanding Community Partnerships

On May 19 the Center on Fathering received an Army Community Partnership Award at a ceremony held at the Fort Carson Headquarters building. Fort Carson and the El Paso County Department of Human Services (DHS) brought the Center on Fathering curriculum to Fort Carson Soldiers and families under the Army Community Service (ACS) Family Advocacy Program (FAP). The partnership aimed to prevent child abuse by encouraging father-child relationships, cultivating bonds, strengthening attachment, encouraging communication, and building family resilience. The program received overwhelming positive feedback from participants showing the need for and importance of programs specifically designed for fathers.



**Fort Carson Garrison Commander Colonel Springer presenting the award to Susan Burt, Center on Fathering Supervisor, and Justin Cole, LCSW, Fort Carson ACS, New Parent Support Home Visitor**

## Center on Fathering Legacy Garden Day

To develop relationships between fathers, the Center is connecting dads in free social activities to meet and participate in with their children. One of those activities is the Legacy Garden. This year the Center purchased a nice 20' X 40' plot through the Bear Creek Garden Association. On May 28<sup>th</sup> we held a gardening day at the plot. Participating dads and their kids came out and planted seedlings and cleaned up the plot. We are always looking for more dads who want to garden with their kids. We are holding bi-weekly meetings on Thursdays at 4:00 pm. If you are interested, or know of a dad that might be interested, contact Gary Grambort at (719) 649-5825 or garygrambort@elpasoco.com . Please do so prior to the meeting so I can send you the invite to the WebEx meeting.



Dave Absher and Mckennon



Our garden plot with new plants

## Center on Fathering has Volunteered for Springs in Bloom and is Sponsoring a Median Strip

Springs in Bloom is a program where individuals, families, clubs and businesses can adopt any of the approximately 100 flower beds located throughout Colorado Springs. It's a way to enhance this great City we live in. The Center on Fathering has volunteered to sponsor a median strip on the corner of 30<sup>th</sup> and Centennial. Staff members and dad Jeff Klosky spent part of the day on May 26<sup>th</sup> planting flowers according to designated design. If you're in the area, check it out.



Alma Moritz, Dawna Braswell, Gary Grambort & Jeff Klosky



The finished median

# DAD'S TIPS

## 2019 NATIONAL PARENTS ORGANIZATION SHARED PARENTING REPORT CARD-WHY DID COLORADO RECEIVE A C?



### POSITIVES:

- Colorado has a legislative declaration which states “in most circumstances, it is in the best interest of all parties to encourage frequent and continuing contact between each parent and the minor children of the marriage after the parents have separated or dissolved their marriage. In order to effectuate this goal when appropriate, the general assembly urges parents to share the rights and responsibilities of child-rearing and to encourage the love, affection, and contact between the children and the parents.” COLO. REV. STAT. § 14-10-124
- Colorado requires courts to consider a “friendly parent” factor when allocating parental rights and responsibilities. Courts are to consider “the ability of the parties to encourage the sharing of love, affection, and contact between the child and the other party.” COLO. REV. STAT. § 14-10-124

### NEGATIVES:

- Colorado has no statutory preference for, or presumption of, shared parenting (joint legal custody and shared physical custody) for temporary or final orders.
- Colorado statutes do not explicitly provide for shared parenting during temporary orders.

To sign up for a citizen action list to be notified when action is being taken in your state and help National Parent Organization advocate for shared parenting go to:

<https://www.sharedparenting.org/advocate>