

P-04- 588 Charter for Children and Fathers

Petition Wording

We call upon the National Assembly for Wales to urge the Welsh Government to adopt all six points in the Charter for Action for Children & Fathers in Wales.

1. All Welsh Government funded programmes to record gender of parents / carers they work with.
2. Set S.M.A.R.T. targets to increase participation of fathers and all other Non Resident Parents with Welsh Government services.
3. First Minister to make annual statement on the importance of fathers AND what the Welsh Government has done to help them in the past 12 months.
4. Encourage improved shared care of children to allow more parents (particularly single parents) to take up training or employment programmes.
5. Recognition of Parental Alienation as a form of emotional abuse of children.
6. Establish a work group under the Family Justice Network for Wales to co-ordinate improved collaboration for those organisations who hold the DWP's Help and Support for Separated Families (HSSF) Mark in Wales

Additional Information

1. Welsh Government has confirmed family support services are not currently asked to record the gender of the parents they work with.
2. Our research with parenting initiatives in Wales shows the average engagement level is between 3 and 11% of service users being male.
3. The precedent is from the USA: <http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2013/06/14/weekly-address-celebrating-fathers-day-weekend>
4. Several US states require the 'right of first refusal' to non-resident parents and grandparents for them to undertake child care:
<http://ilfamilylaw.com/new-law-right-first-refusal-child-care/> In Illinois

they equate 'the best interests of the child' with 'maximum time with both parents'.

5. The Family Justice Network for Wales rejected our call to recognise Parental Alienation as a form of emotional abuse of children in May 2014⁶. The DWP have confirmed their support for this proposal and Albert Heaney Chair of the FJN has also indicated his support.

Petition raised by: FNF Both Parents Matter Cymru

Date Petition first considered by Committee: 23 September 2014

Number of signatures: 335