

HOUSE BILL NO. HB0196

Divorce actions-parenting classes.

Sponsored by: Representative(s) Iekel, Alden, Berger, Gay
and Warren and Senator(s) Burns and Massie

A BILL

for

1 AN ACT relating to child custody and visitation resulting
2 from divorce proceedings; modifying and expanding parent
3 education participation; imposing conditions and
4 requirements; providing for exemptions; and providing for
5 an effective date.

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7 *Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Wyoming:*

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9 **Section 1.** W.S. 20-2-201(f) and by creating a new
10 subsection (g) is amended to read:

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12 **20-2-201. Disposition and maintenance of children in**
13 **decree or order; access to records.**

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15 (f) ~~At any time the court may require parents to~~
16 ~~attend appropriate parenting classes, including but not~~

1 ~~limited to, parenting classes to lessen the effects of~~
2 ~~divorce on children.~~ In an action for dissolution of
3 marriage, legal separation or annulment that involves
4 biological or adopted children of the parties, the court
5 shall order both parties to attend a parent education
6 program in the best interests of the children, unless an
7 exemption is granted under subsection (g) of this section.
8 Parent education program providers shall not disclose
9 information pertaining to any party obtained as a result of
10 participation in a program under this subsection. The
11 parent education program shall:

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13 (i) Be a minimum of four (4) hours of
14 instruction;

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16 (ii) Be certified and approved in accordance
17 with minimum standards adopted by the board of judicial
18 policy and administration, and provided by a public or
19 private institution or entity;

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21 (iii) At minimum, provide instruction in the
22 following areas which informs both parties on the divorce
23 process and its impact upon children and instructs the

1 parties in parenting skills and strategies to enable the
2 parties to parent children in a cooperative manner:

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4 (A) Developmental stages of children;

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6 (B) Adjustment of children to parental
7 separation;

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9 (C) Negative effects of access denial;

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11 (D) Domestic violence;

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13 (E) Options for dispute resolution and
14 conflict management;

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16 (F) Financial responsibilities to the
17 children;

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19 (G) Cooperative parenting, including when
20 cooperative parenting is not appropriate and, when
21 appropriate, other options to cooperative parenting;

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23 (H) Custody, parenting time and shared
24 parenting plans;

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(J) Long distance parenting.

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(iv) Be completed by each party within sixty
(60) days following the date of the court's order;

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(v) Be the responsibility of each party to
arrange for participation and for payment of costs for
participating in the court approved program;

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(vi) Not require both parties to attend or
receive instruction at the same time;

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(vii) Be completed prior to a final decree or
entry of an order by the court. Each party shall file
certification of completion with the clerk of court.

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(g) An exemption from the parent education program
required under subsection (f) of this section may be
granted by the court following completion of an exception
affidavit in accordance with this subsection. The affidavit
may be obtained from the clerk of court and may be
submitted at any time. The affidavit shall state and
attendance may be waived for one (1) of the following:

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(i) The party has previously attended a parent
education program complying with subsection (f) of this
section;

(ii) Other circumstances identified by the
court.

Section 2. This act is effective July 1, 2005.

(END)