

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2015

SENATE BILL 519
RATIFIED BILL

AN ACT TO PROMOTE THE ENCOURAGEMENT OF PARENTING TIME WITH CHILDREN BY BOTH PARENTS.

The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

SECTION 1. Article 1 of Chapter 50 of the General Statutes is amended by adding a new section to read:

"§ 50-13.01. Purposes.

It is the policy of the State of North Carolina to:

- (1) Encourage focused, good faith, and child-centered parenting agreements to reduce needless litigation over child custody matters and to promote the best interest of the child.
- (2) Encourage parents to take responsibility for their child by setting the expectation that parenthood will be a significant and ongoing responsibility.
- (3) Encourage programs and court practices that reflect the active and ongoing participation of both parents in the child's life and contact with both parents when such is in the child's best interest, regardless of the parents' present marital status, subject to laws regarding abuse, neglect, and dependency.
- (4) Encourage both parents to share equitably in the rights and responsibilities of raising their child, even after dissolution of marriage or unwed relationship.
- (5) Encourage each parent to establish and maintain a healthy relationship with the other parent when such is determined to be in the best interest of the child, taking into account mental illness, substance abuse, domestic violence, or any other factor the court deems appropriate."

SECTION 2. G.S. 50-13.2(a) reads as rewritten:

"§ 50-13.2. Who entitled to custody; terms of custody; visitation rights of grandparents; taking child out of State; consideration of parent's military service.

(a) An order for custody of a minor child entered pursuant to this section shall award the custody of such child to such person, agency, organization or institution as will best promote the interest and welfare of the child. In making the determination, the court shall consider all relevant factors including acts of domestic violence between the parties, the safety of the child, and the safety of either party from domestic violence by the other party and shall ~~make findings accordingly.~~ party. An order for custody must include written findings of fact which that reflect the consideration of each of these factors and that support the determination of what is in the best interest of the child. Between ~~the mother and father,~~ the parents, whether natural or adoptive, no presumption shall apply as to who will better promote the interest and welfare of the child. Joint custody to the parents shall be considered upon the request of either parent."



SECTION 3. This act is effective when it becomes law.

In the General Assembly read three times and ratified this the 29th day of September, 2015.

s/ Tom Apodaca
Presiding Officer of the Senate

s/ Tim Moore
Speaker of the House of Representatives

Pat McCrory
Governor

Approved _____ .m. this _____ day of _____, 2015