

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2025

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HOUSE BILL 780
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Short Title: All Pro Dads & Responsible Fatherhood NC. (Public)

Sponsors: Representatives Willis, D. Hall, B. Jones, and Bell (Primary Sponsors).
For a complete list of sponsors, refer to the North Carolina General Assembly web site.

Referred to: Health, if favorable, Appropriations, if favorable, Rules, Calendar, and Operations
of the House

April 7, 2025

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED
AN ACT TO PROVIDE FUNDS FOR ADDITIONAL ALL PRO DAD CHAPTERS AND
CREATE A PROGRAM TO SUPPORT NORTH CAROLINA FATHERS.

Whereas, research affirms that children with involved fathers tend to perform better socially, maintain better school attendance, have a lower risk of dropping out, and are less likely to engage in the use of drugs or alcohol; and

Whereas, the fatherlessness crisis in America affects 1 in 5 children, or 15.7 million kids, who are raised without a father (U.S. Census Bureau, 2023); and

Whereas, 80% of single-parent households in the United States in 2023 were headed by single mothers; and

Whereas, abundant research demonstrates that 71% of children growing up without a father figure, whether physically or emotionally absent, perform more poorly academically and experience regular truancy; and

Whereas, teens without a father are 7 times more likely to experience teen pregnancy and have a 54% likelihood of being poorer than their parents; and

Whereas, there is an 85% chance that fatherless children will become involved with the juvenile justice system (Children's Bureau, 2023); and

Whereas, fathers' engagement plays a critical role in helping children overcome barriers to education, including mental, emotional, and behavioral challenges; and

Whereas, such engagement fosters improvements in social interactions, academic performance, school attendance, and decreases the likelihood of dropping out, while improving student performance; and

Whereas, conversely, impaired behaviors exhibited by fathers can lead to insufficient development of a child's emotional intelligence and mental resilience, hindering their overall growth and educational success; Now, therefore,
The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

PART I. FUNDS FOR ALL PRO DAD

SECTION 1. There is appropriated from the General Fund to the Office of State Budget and Management the sum of two million dollars (\$2,000,000) in nonrecurring funds for the 2025-2026 fiscal year to provide a directed grant to Family First, Inc., the nonprofit corporation registered in the state of Florida, to expand its All Pro Dad fatherhood program in this State, provided that (i) the nonprofit registers as an entity with the Secretary of State to conduct business in the State and (ii) the nonprofit allocates the funds appropriated in this act to



expand its All Pro Dad program in North Carolina, including increasing All Pro Dad Chapters in schools, holding events that encourage father-child engagement and foster improved communication between children and fathers, and distributing resources to help fathers enhance their parenting skills and become more involved in their children's lives.

PART II. RESPONSIBLE FATHERHOOD NC PROGRAM

SECTION 2.1. Article 2 of Chapter 108A of the General Statutes is amended by adding a new Part to read:

"Part 12. Responsible Fatherhood NC Act.

"§ 108A-70.60. Short title.

This act may be cited as the "Responsible Fatherhood NC Act."

"§ 108A-70.61. Definitions.

The following definitions apply in this Part:

(1) Department. – Refers to the Department of Health and Human Services.

(2) Program. – Refers to the Responsible Fatherhood NC program.

"§ 108A-70.62. Creation of the Responsible Fatherhood NC program; purpose.

(a) The General Assembly recognizes that families are stronger when both parents act responsibly in caring for their children. It is the intent of the General Assembly to recognize and support the important and unique role that fathers play in ensuring the physical, emotional, and economic well-being of their children and families.

(b) The Department shall contract for the development and implementation of the Responsible Fatherhood NC program. The program shall provide an opportunity for every father in the State to be able to obtain information and inspiration that will motivate and enable him to enhance his abilities as a father, recognizing that some fathers have greater challenges than others and would benefit from greater support.

(c) The entity the Department contracts with to develop, implement, and manage the program, "Program Manager," shall be a nonprofit organization that satisfies all of the following criteria:

(1) Has a history of focusing on responsible fatherhood, including providing online resources to fathers, and engaging fathers, father figures, and children through community-based and school-based events to encourage responsible fatherhood.

(2) Has the organizational capacity to manage a statewide initiative and successfully carry out the requirements of this section.

(d) The Program Manager shall be solely responsible for developing, implementing, and managing the program which shall include, but not be limited to, all of the following:

(1) A statewide media campaign that increases the awareness and importance of fathers being involved in their children's lives.

(2) Resources and information for fathers and father figures to increase engagement and involvement in their children's lives.

(3) Promotion of related fatherhood programs that are provided by the Department of Public Instruction, the Community College System, or The University of North Carolina System.

(e) To most effectively use the funds appropriated to this program, the Program Manager shall identify and use other existing media assets, content, and online resources it deems appropriate, including any existing media assets, content, and online resources it has available, to implement and execute the items required by this section.

"§ 108A-70.63. Grants to address the needs of fathers.

(a) The Department shall award grants to nonprofit community-based organizations to address the needs of fathers. The Department shall award the following types of grants:

- (1) Grants that comprehensively address the needs of fathers, such as assisting them in finding employment, managing child support obligations, transitioning from a period of incarceration, accessing health care, understanding child development, and enhancing parenting skills. Services provided shall be tailored to the needs of the father being served. Case management services shall be provided to the fathers who are served by the grants under this subdivision.
- (2) Grants that provide evidence-based parenting education specifically for fathers. The grants under this subdivision do not require case management services.
- (b) The Department shall prioritize applicants for a grant specified under subsection (a) of this section based on all of the following:
- (1) Need in a geographic area and the population to be served by the grant as indicated by, at a minimum, all of the following:
- a. Unemployment rates.
- b. Incarceration rates.
- c. Housing instability.
- d. The number of single-parent households.
- e. The number of public benefit recipients.
- f. Graduation rates.
- g. Levels of academic achievement.
- (2) If an applicant has a primary mission of, or a history of a significant focus on and effective work toward, addressing the needs of men in their role as fathers.
- (3) Applicant current and historical involvement in the community being served.
- (4) Applicant commitment and capability to employ competent staff who can effectively engage with the fathers being served, including, at a minimum, those individuals who share a similar background as the fathers being served.
- (5) The number of individuals the applicant plans to serve through the grant and the projected costs for the program.
- (6) Applicant organizational capacity to effectively meet the requirements of the grant and to deliver the programs proposed by the applicant. The Department may offer technical assistance to applicants and grant recipients that have lower organizational capacity as long as such organizations have, or the organization's leadership has, significant experience serving fathers.
- (c) Grants shall be awarded for no more than three years, with subsequent year funding contingent on compliance with grant requirements and adequate performance. Grant recipients shall submit reports to the Department in a format and at intervals prescribed by the Department."

SECTION 2.2. The Department has six months from the effective date of this act to implement the requirements outlined in Section 2.1 of this act.

SECTION 2.3. There is appropriated from the General Fund to the Department of Health and Human Services the sum of three million dollars (\$3,000,000) in nonrecurring funds for the 2025-2026 fiscal year to be used to implement the provisions of Section 2.1 of this act. Of the funds appropriated by this act, the Department shall use up to two million dollars (\$2,000,000) to contract for the Program Manager as authorized in G.S. 108A-70.62. The remainder of the funds shall be used for the grants authorized in G.S. 108A-70.63.

PART III. EFFECTIVE DATE

SECTION 3. This act becomes effective July 1, 2025.