

**IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF MADISON COUNTY, ALABAMA
THE TWENTY-THIRD JUDICIAL CIRCUIT**

**STANDING PRE-TRIAL ORDER
RE: "TRANSITION IN PARENTING" CLASS**

Each year approximately 2,000 divorce cases are filed in Madison County. Many of those cases involve minor children. As a result, hundreds of children in Madison County suffer the trauma and stress which is inherent in the divorce of their mother and father. The effects of divorce and custody disputes upon children are well known and well documented.

Parents going through a divorce, or custody case, also undergo a stressful, traumatic experience. Given the adversarial nature of the process and the emotions and fears of their parents, the children of divorce all too often become victims. Children can be caught in an emotional tug-of-war, even when parents do their best to keep the interests of their children in the forefront. A court is required, as a matter of law and conscience, to do what is in the best interest of the children.

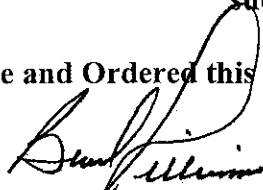
There is an established educational program for divorcing parents to help them see divorce through the eyes of their children called "Transition in Parenting." This nationally recognized program teaches parents the effects of divorce on different developmental ages, common problems facing children, visitation issues, pitfalls to avoid, and many other topics which can help a parent. It only requires each parent to invest four hours of their time and forty dollars.

Based upon the known effects of divorce on children, the benefits of this program, and the minimal cost to parents, the undersigned Circuit Judges find required participation in the program to be in the best interest of children involved in divorce or custody disputes. Therefore, it is ORDERED, ADJUDGED and DECREED as follows:

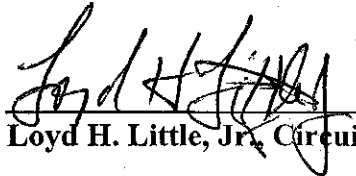
1. Any original divorce action involving children shall be subject to this order.
2. Any post-divorce proceeding seeking a modification of custody or visitation shall be subject to this order, unless the parents previously have completed this program.

3. In a contested or uncontested divorce action, no final decree will be entered until at least the custodial parent submits proof of the successful completion of the "Transition in Parenting" program. The visitation/joint custody rights of the other parent will be suspended until he/she completes the class.
4. Relief from this order can be obtained upon proof that it would work an undue logistical hardship on a party, or that, under the facts of the case, it would not be necessary for the parents to attend this program. Insufficient time or job conflicts generally will not be considered sufficient proof, as this generally demonstrates inconvenience of the parents, not what is in the best interest of the children. The cost of the program can be waived upon application to the appropriate judge, upon a showing of extreme financial hardship and inability to pay. Forms to apply for a waiver of the cost are available in the Family Court Clerk's office.
5. A copy of this Order shall be issued with each case involving a child and is hereby adopted as the order of this Court in all such proceedings.

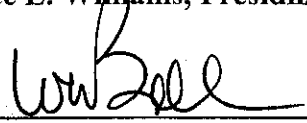
Done and Ordered this 18th day of July, 2005.



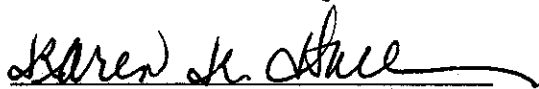
Bruce E. Williams, Presiding Judge



Loyd H. Little, Jr., Circuit Judge



William K. Bell, Circuit Judge



Karen K. Hall, Circuit Judge