



# Start a New Chapter

Part I—For the Non-Member

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Also visit our PWP Library and online Shopping Mall

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## Letterhead

(date)

Dear Fellow Single Parent

I am pleased that you want to start a Parents Without Partners Chapter in your community. Parents Without Partners was founded in 1957 to serve the needs of single parents and children of one-parent families. Today the single parent family faces many issues and concerns that are unique to single parents, and Parents Without Partners, as an organization, is dedicated to helping single parents and their children cope successfully with the changes in their lives. As a social and educational force, Parents Without Partners is widely recognized and respected.

Parents Without Partners is made up of locally organized chapters which started much as you are starting now—with a few concerned, interested individuals. We are a truly self-help organization. We are here to help one another, and we do.

PWP is an all-volunteer organization. Volunteer members do all of the work! Officers are elected to chapter boards of directors annually, and they, along with committee members, plan and carry out the administrative and educational programming. All members are encouraged and expected to be involved members, whether they serve on a committee, as an officer, or just support the activities of the chapter by attending.

Parents Without Partners chapters offer many activities for single parents and their children ... all planned and hosted by volunteer members. Each chapter has a variety of educational, family and adult social activities. There are guidelines for chapters on scheduling their activities so as to stay in balance with our mission to provide support for single parent families.

I am enclosing/attaching *FACTS ABOUT SINGLE PARENTS* and *SO, YOU WANT TO START A PWP CHAPTER*. After you have reviewed this information please contact me and we can discuss starting a chapter in your community. In order to successfully charter a new chapter it is important that we work together to achieve this goal. I hope to hear from you soon.

Sincerely,

(contact information: name, address, phone, e-mail address)

## **SO, YOU WANT TO START A PARENTS WITHOUT PARTNERS CHAPTER!**

**You will need to begin by holding an organizational meeting.**

1. SECURE an organizational meeting FACILITY. It is best if the facility is in a public place. Many people are uncomfortable going to someone's home if they do not know them. Also, the meeting location will need to be announced and advertised. People usually do not want their home address publicized.
  - A community room at a library or bank, a school, church, or hall (Elks, Moose) are some suggestions. The facility should be free or at a nominal charge. Parents Without Partners is a non-profit organization, and free facilities are often available to them.
2. DETERMINE the DATE for the organizational meeting. The date may depend on when the facility is available. What is the best night of the week in your area? (If Wednesday is known to be "church night" in your area that may not be a good night to meet.) Or is a Saturday or Sunday afternoon a better time for a first meeting? Check with other interested single parents to determine what will work best. However, no one afternoon/night is going to be ideal for everyone.
  - Whenever possible, a knowledgeable PWP member will conduct the organizational meeting. If distance and location make this impossible, information and materials will be provided for the meeting presentation.
3. MAKE a LISTING of all the NEW MEDIA (newspapers, radio, and TV stations) in the area you want the chapter to serve. Most of the information can be found in the phone book. Go to your public library if you do not have phone books for all of the service area. The listing needs to have NAMES, ADDRESSES including ZIP Codes and PHONE NUMBERS. You may need to make phone calls to get complete information. NEWS RELEASE and PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENTS (PSAs) need to be mailed to the news media THREE WEEKS PRIOR to the Organizational meeting.
4. PREPARE the NEW RELEASES, PSA's and the FLYERS announcing the organizational meeting. List the TIME, DATE, and MEETING FACILITY INFORMATION including complete ADDRESS, DIRECTIONS, PURPOSE of the meeting and CONTACT PHONE NUMBER. The news release needs to be mailed to the new media. The flyers need to be posted and handed out around the chapter service area; community bulletin boards, stores, social service agencies, libraries, any place willing to post the flyer. Postings and handouts should be done TWO TO THREE weeks PRIOR to the organizational meeting. SAMPLE news releases, PSAs and flyers are available from the person assisting you.
5. Other ideas of PUBLICIZE the organizational meeting are to contact the schools in the area as well as apartment complex managers. ASK the schools if they are will to give flyers (you provide) to the students or put the information in the school newsletter. Apartment complex managers may be willing to give flyers (you provide) to their tenants and/or put the information in their apartment complex newsletter.
  - A PWP member (usually a Zone Officer or a Regional Officer) will assist you in starting the chapter. You will need to discuss starting the chapter with the person helping you before proceeding.

**The first key to getting a PWP chapter started is GOOD PUBLICITY! The more you do the better your chances are for success.**

**The second key to success is MAINTAINING COMMUNICATION with the PWP members assisting you. This person is experienced and knowledgeable, can answer your questions and provide you with information and support, and guide you through the necessary steps to charter the chapter.**

# FACTS ABOUT PARENTS WITHOUT PARTNERS

## *WHERE NEW FRIENDSHIPS BEGIN*

### MISSION STATEMENT

*Parents Without Partners provides single parents and their children with an opportunity for enhancing personal growth, self-confidence, and sensitivity towards others by offering an environment for support, friendship, and the exchange of parenting techniques.*

**Parents Without Partners, Inc.**, is an international, non-profit membership organization devoted to the welfare and interests of single parents and their children. Single parents may join one of many chapters; they may be male or female, custodial or non-custodial, separated, divorced, widowed, or never married.

**Parents Without Partners was founded** in 1957 in New York City by two single parents: Jim Egleston, a non-custodial parent, and Jacqueline Bernard, a custodial parent. As concerned parents, they felt isolated from society because of their marital status, and decided to form a mutual support organization. Following their first newspaper advertisements directed to "Parents Without Partners", 25 single parents attended the first meeting in a Greenwich Village church basement. Later, media attention brought inquiries from all over the country.

### Parents Without Partners Today

- Thousands of members in the United States and Canada
- 65% female, 35% male
- Ages range from 18 to 80; most have teenage or older children.
- Average length of membership is four years.
- Approximately 85% of the membership is separated or divorced.
- Never married members are under-represented in PWP compared to national statistics.
- Widowed parent membership is comparable to national statistics.
- PWP Members are typical middle class North Americans. They come from all walks of life, representing a kaleidoscope of occupations, interests, income brackets, and educational attainment.
- Some PWP members have only recently become single parents, while some have been single for some time. Some are sophisticated; other have led sheltered lives. All are in a process of transition and change, and seek help from PWP.
- PWP members are of all faiths and political beliefs.
- All chapter members are verified as being single parents by members or professionals in the community.

### Parents Without Partners Chapters

- Chapters range in size from 15 to 300 members.
- Chapters are run entirely by volunteer members who assume a variety of leadership roles.
- All chapters, to comply with their PWP International Charter, must run programs balanced among three areas:

### ***Educational, family, and adult social/recreational programs.***

- Educational activities may be group discussions, lectures by psychologists, attorneys, or other professionals, and also workshops.
- Family activities may include, but are not limited to, picnics, hikes, camping, sports, etc. for children and their parent. These activities may be unique in that they are the one place where children can interact with other single parent children.
- Adult social/recreational activities help single parents learn to relate again with other adults as single parents.
- Chapters also conduct community involvement programs. These include community outreach (providing speakers for seminars and workshops in the community), fund raising for national and local charities, or cooperative exchanges (such as baby-sitting, clothing or toy exchanges).
- Chapters are organized under Regional Councils, which elect officers, coordinate programs, provide training to chapters and sponsor regular conferences.
- Regional Councils are organized into Zones, which elect officers, coordinate programs, provide training to Regional Councils and sponsor annual conferences.
- There are 9 Zones which cover the 50 states and most Canadian Provinces.

### **Parents Without Partners International Services**

As an international organization Parents Without Partners offers the following services to all members:

- The **Single Parent Newsletter** free for members.
- **Advocacy**—PWP speaks for all single parents and their children on Capitol Hill, at conferences, in national coalitions, and in workshops. The International Board of Directors supports legislative policies and priorities to further the interests of single parent families.
- **An Annual Convention**—Every year at the annual meeting, members conduct organization business, elect officers and attend workshops on both single parenting subjects and how to run PWP programs at the chapter level. Children and adults receive special awards for arts and talent.
- **Organization awards—Single Parent of the Year** is presented to PWP's outstanding parent.
- **Distinguished Service to Children Award** is presented to a person or group outside PWP that has made a great contribution to children and teens.
- **Scholarships**—PWP teens compete for college scholarships.
- **Affiliation with U.S. Department of Education and U.S. Health & Human Services** which allows our members to be up to date on educational and health issue important to single parents.
- **Website**—Featuring Chat Room for members to exchange ideas, bulletin boards where members can ask for and receive help with problems and find address to contact IBOD members; plus an Events Page where members find out what is happening in other areas around the country; and a Chapter Search section to locate chapters in their area.

### **International Affiliations**

- Parents Without Partners, Australia (1975 affiliation)
- Verband Alleinstehender Mutter and Vater, Germany (1984 affiliation)
- Gingerbread, Great Britain (1984 affiliation)
- Birthright, New Zealand (1992 affiliation)
- Single Parents of Antigua-Barbuda (1996 affiliation)

***For more information on Parents Without Partners, Inc., check your local phone directory for a chapter listing or contact the Parents Without Partners International Office at 740-450-1332.***

**Visit the PWP International web site at: <http://www.parentswithoutpartners.org>**

## ***JOIN PARENTS WITHOUT PARTNERS, INC.***

***ELIGIBILITY*** – To be eligible for membership in Parents Without Partners, Inc., a person must be a Parent of one or more sons or daughters and be single by reason of death, divorce, separation or never married, or other reason which may be deemed acceptable by Parents Without Partners, Inc. Custody of children is not a factor.

***MEMBERSHIP*** – An individual, who meets the above eligibility requirements, can join PWP at the chapter level by completing an application, providing a professional reference and paying the annual membership fee. The annual membership fee, established by the chapter, range between \$30 to \$60. A portion of the membership fee goes to Parents Without Partners, International.

***MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS*** – As the largest single parent organization in the world, Parents Without Partners provides members with a variety of unique, timely, topical and targeted membership benefits.

### ***CHAPTERS PROVIDE:***

- Chapter locations throughout North America offer local networking with many opportunities for support, growth and education.
- Ongoing local chapter activities for the single parent and her/his family.
- Personal/leadership development workshops at zone training session and conference and international conventions.
- Educational programs and discussion groups on parent-child relationships, effective communication, dating, and self-improvement. Special programs may be offered for widowed, never-married and divorced members.
- Recreational activities such as camping, hiking, picnics, bowling, swimming and crafts for single parents and their children.
- Adult social activities.
- Community service and advocacy projects on single parent issues.

### ***ADDITIONAL MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS:***

- Opportunity to attend the Annual International Convention of Parents Without Partners, an event jam packed with social and educational activities just for single parents & their children.
- Access to scholarship programs for children of PWP members.
- Issues advocacy program, which increases the quality of life of children living in single parent homes.

- Access to the members only section of the Parents Without Partners, Inc's web site where you can meet other members who are facing similar situations.

## **Parents Without Partners—Structure**

**Below are the responsibilities for each level in the organization.**

### **International—IBOD**

- Establish policy and guidelines for the good of the organization
- International Convention—annually
- Financial Management
- International Membership
- Manuals
- Program Standards
- Leadership Training

### **Zone—ZBOD**

- Disseminate information back to Regions and/or Chapters from IBOD Meetings
- Training for Regional and Chapter Officers
- Leadership Training
- Zone Conference—annually
- Financial Management
- Regional/Chapter Audits
- Zone Membership
- Chapter Formation

### **Regional—RCBOD**

- Disseminate information back to Chapters from Zone Board Meetings
- Training of Chapter Officers
- Regional Conferences (at least 2 per year)
- Financial Management
- Chapter Guidance
- Chapter Formation

### **Chapter—CBOD**

- Support General Membership of the Chapter through programming standards guidelines as set up through the IBOD.
- Follow established policies and guidelines as set up through IBOD
- Recruiting new members through Community Involvement
- Monthly General Membership meetings



## **PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT (PSA)**

An organizational meeting to start a Chapter of Parents Without Partners will be held (day/date),  
from (time to time) at (location/address).

All single parents who are separated, divorced, widowed or never married are invited to attend.

Age of children is not a factor and custody of children is not a membership requirement. For

Additional information contact (name) at (phone number).

### **CONTACT:**

(name)

(address)

(phone number)

[www.parentswithoutpartners.org](http://www.parentswithoutpartners.org)

-----NOTE: There is a pre-recorded 15 second PSA that can also be used. Your PWP  
contact person will have a copy of this for you to use, be sure to ask for it.

## NEWS RELEASE

### For Immediate Release

#### Parents Without Partners To Start Chapter

An organizational meeting to start a Chapter of Parents Without Partners will be held (day/date), from (time to time), at (place/address), to serve the needs of single parent families in (town) and the surrounding area. Representatives from (Region/Zone) will conduct the meeting.

Parents Without Partners is a non-profit, non-sectarian, educational, self-help, support organization devoted to the welfare and interest of single parents and their children. All

All single parents who are separated, divorced, widowed, or never married are invited to attend. Age of children is not a factor and custody of children is not a membership requirement.

Parents Without Partners is an all volunteer organization. Chapter members plan monthly calendars which include family, educational, and parent social activities. For additional information contact (name) at (phone number).

### **CONTACT:**

(name)  
(address)  
(phone number)

## THE ORGANIZATIONAL MEETING

With the help of your PWP contact person you will have to hold an organizational meeting after having advertised it for 2 or 3 weeks. We will not go into great detail at this time but below is a brief sketch of what is required for the meeting and how it should transpire. A more detailed explanation and overhead presentation will be given to you soon.

### SUPPLIES NEEDED—

Sign-in sheets, pens

Name badges

Handouts (some samples are in this document and some will be given you later)

A copy of the presentation transparencies or flip chart

Sample Chapter newsletters from existing chapters.

Refreshments (optional)

Membership/Charter materials

Whenever possible it is best to have your PWP contact with you for the meeting.

Dress appropriately, remember people are influenced by first impressions.

Arrive early, setup room.

Greet people as they arrive, ask them to sign-in.

The overhead/flipchart used for the presentation follows this format:

Welcome

We are....

Eligibility

Founding

Today

Structure

Chapter—Education, Family, Adult

Any Questions?

After this presentation if current PWP members are there you might ask them to speak briefly of their experience.

If it is determined that there is very little interest in forming a new chapter, you may not want to continue further with the presentation. You might suggest another organizational meeting be held before the participants decide not to proceed with a chapter.

If there is interest, do the following to get started:

- Appoint temporary chair, secretary, and treasurer

- Name the chapter

- Establish dues

- Sign up new members. Be enthusiastic!

  - Remind them of eligibility requirement and professional reference

  - Dues must be paid at the time the application is taken. If they cannot pay then, suggest they attend the next meeting to complete paperwork.

- After application is filled in and dues paid they may sign the charter petition.

Open an account at a local bank. Obtain a post office box. Arrange for a regular meeting facility.

Recruit a Professional Advisory Committee.

THANK everyone for attending the meeting. Ask again to be sure everyone signed in. End the meeting with positive comments and encourage everyone to attend the next meeting.

After the meeting would be the time to speak individually with attendees over coffee and light refreshments.