

PARTICIPATION HIGHLIGHTS

1. **INTERNATIONAL ACTIVITY: HOLD AS MANY PUBLIC CANDLELIGHT VIGILS AS POSSIBLE NATIONWIDE!** All vigils will take place at the same date & time: Thursday, September 25 at 7:30 p.m.; be sure to bring purple ribbons!

IMPORTANT NOTE: People who cannot attend a candlelight vigil are urged to hold a "Home Vigil" and light a candle in their home for at least 15 minutes starting at 7:30 p.m. on September 25. Media attention to the human interest perspective of these "Home Vigils" may result. I need to receive the names, addresses and phone numbers of people who will hold "Home Vigils".
2. Think about activities you feel you can successfully undertake **and start planning now.** Activities include any event where ribbons are displayed in public, and can be anything from:
 - **Rallies, public gatherings, public presentations,** with or without political representatives, community leaders or persons of importance (senator, councilman, mayor, etc.);
 - **Social/fun events, such as picnics or other types of social gatherings.** Also, existing community or other organized events such as fairs or picnics can be used to publicly tie/have a public showing of purple ribbons.
 - **The simple act of finding a public place and tying purple ribbons,** i.e., downtown areas, parks, etc. is extremely valuable. Purple ribbons can show up anywhere...the more the better!
 - **Almost anything qualifies as long as you bring along the purple ribbons!** It can be simple or creative. (You can also go to public places and give out ribbons with brochures). Consider tying purple ribbons in public places such as city halls, courthouses, parks, downtown or business areas, etc. Consider tying purple ribbons in residential areas, a block, or area in a neighborhood.
 - If you can, obtain proclamations from cities, counties--even from your state representatives. Send U.S. and state representatives brochures and buttons and ask them to send you letters of support for EPW.
3. Participation on an individual basis of as many people as possible to tie purple ribbons (your members and the public where possible)--on anything, anywhere, where they can be seen: outside their homes (trees, mailboxes, front doors), car antennas. Wear them when possible, too.
 - Please compile a list containing addresses where people will tie ribbons; (simple sign in sheets/logs from meetings, etc.); legible handwritten lists are fine. This is important for media purposes; media can be disinterested unless they can find ribbons or have lists showing people who are participating.
 - **CONTACT/NETWORK WITH OTHER ORGANIZATIONS** about EPW for participation, and please notify me as to name and telephone number of their contact person.
 - **SPREAD THE WORD TO YOUR FAMILY AND FRIENDS** to tie purple ribbons and participate in your public candlelight vigil(s) or to hold their own "Home Vigil" to add their voices in sending our message!
4. I would be happy to receive your "quote statement" (a few sentences or a few paragraphs in length) for release to the press. **Be sure to submit your quote before the September 4, 2003 press release cutoff.**
5. **PRESS RELEASE CUTOFF IS SEPT. 4, 2003, THE CUTOFF DATE TO NOTIFY ME OF YOUR ACTIVITIES. BUT...PLEASE DON'T WAIT UNTIL THE LAST MINUTE TO NOTIFY ME!** Advance notice of confirmed events and activities you will be holding helps tremendously. Tentative notification is helpful, but keep in mind that activities cannot be counted unless they are explicitly confirmed that they will take place. Call or email me at any time with updates on activities or questions. Please keep in mind the importance of media attention, and keep me informed as to activities so I can compile as complete a press release as possible to issue internationally. Within the last two weeks before EPW, I need to prepare and distribute the press release and can include only those activities which I am notified are confirmed by that time...last minute phone calls are OK.
7. Contact any medium of press you like...radio, TV, newspaper, regarding EPW; early contacts may get some "pre-event publicity." Otherwise, feel free to hold off and contact them closer to the event. You can prepare your own local press releases containing your local events; contact me if you need help. Within a week of the event you will receive the international release containing a list of all activities taking place internationally for your use.
8. **IDEAS, QUESTIONS, SUGGESTIONS? PLEASE CALL OR EMAIL ME!** Please speak loud and slowly when leaving phone messages, it really helps! (909) 591-3689; email: pattidiroff@att.net

HIGHLIGHTS REGARDING THE MESSAGE AND OBJECTIVES OF EPW:

1. EPW IS SEPTEMBER 22, 2003 THROUGH SEPTEMBER 28, 2003.

2. The EPW mission statement:

"If we as a society fail to recognize that there is no substitute for the love of a parent in children's lives, and there is no substitute for the equal presence of both parents in children's lives to meet their children's need for that love, we have lost the ability to see, feel, and touch the very thing we live, breathe and feel as the very heart and soul of our humanity: our own human love. This is what we mean when we say 'The best parent is both parents' "

3. Official Quote for EPW from David Levy, National President, Children's Rights Council:

"It is time long overdue that America realized that children do best when they have a father and a mother equally and fully committed and present in their lives. Equal Parents' Week is a celebration of that need, the fulfillment of which will benefit children and all America. There is no one as crazy about their children as their parents. That 100% love and support for their children needs to be encouraged and supported, not cast aside as it often is for children whose parents are unwed, separated or divorced."

Feel free to use the Mission Statement and David Levy's quote in promoting Equal Parents' Week.

4. The message and objective of EPW that needs to be emphasized is: equality is not just a political or legal concept. Equality imputes values -- civil rights, conscience, and responsibility. **EVERYONE:** Society, our governments, and justice systems all have a responsibility to keep families together by promoting a system that is a value system: that values and protects both parents, children, and all family members. Everyone needs to care about what happens to parents and children when they walk into court. It is our devotion to parenthood and the love for our children that we feel in our hearts and souls that inspire us to advocate equality, as well as the urgent issues of civil rights and justice for families. A heartfelt passion for parenthood and family values must translate into social responsibility to make these values a reality. EPW is a movement advocating awareness of the problems affecting parents and children and reform to restore and protect the civil rights of parents and children. The message each purple ribbon sends is a message of equality, responsibility and values. The message behind the message is one of civil rights, conscience, and love.
5. The CRC encourages everyone to support National Parents' Day ("NPD") in furtherance of the mutual objectives EPW shares with NPD to strengthen the role parents play in children's lives and advocating family values. In promoting Equal Parents' Week, always include our support and encourage support for NPD.
6. The Joint Statement is a formal statement of the fundamental principles and objectives of EPW, and protects the integrity of the event and all participating organizations. All participating organizations must advocate positions consistent with it. In other words, organizations which advocate special interests/positions inconsistent with the objectives of EPW (i.e., do not advocate joint custody and parental equality) cannot participate in EPW or represent that EPW furthers their philosophy.
7. The EPW and *JUST SAY YES!* brochures contain a comprehensive discussion of the issues addressed by EPW and *JUST SAY YES!*. They are informational handouts and can be given to the public, other organizations, the press, or anyone who you want to contact regarding EPW and *JUST SAY YES!*.