

generally to Single Parent Services.

BY adding to

Article 88A - Social Services Administration
Section 111 through 113, inclusive, to be under the new
subtitle "Single Parent Services"
Annotated Code of Maryland
(1969 Replacement Volume and 1977 Supplement)

SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND, That section(s) of the Annotated Code of Maryland be repealed, amended, or enacted to read as follows:

Article 88A - Social Services Administration

SINGLE PARENT SERVICES

111.

(A) IT IS THE DECLARED POLICY OF THE STATE OF MARYLAND THAT SINGLE PARENTS SHOULD HAVE ACCESS TO A COMPREHENSIVE RANGE OF SERVICES TO ENABLE THEM TO MAKE SUITABLE PLANS FOR THE CARE OF THEIR CHILDREN AND OF THEMSELVES. OF SPECIAL CONCERN ARE THE YOUTH UNDER 18 YEARS OF AGE WHO ARE PREGNANT, OR WHO ARE PARENTS OF CHILDREN FOR WHOM THEY ARE UNPREPARED TO GIVE ADEQUATE CARE AND PROTECTION. WHEN THE FAMILIES OF SINGLE PARENTS ARE UNAVAILABLE, UNWILLING, OR UNABLE TO GIVE THEM NEEDED FINANCIAL, MATERIAL, AND EMOTIONAL SUPPORT, THEN TIMELY SERVICES MUST BE PROVIDED BY THE STATE AS AN EFFECTIVE ALTERNATIVE TO COSTLY, LONG-TERM FOSTER CARE, AND TO PREVENT THE NEGLECT OR ABUSE OF CHILDREN.

(B) IT IS FURTHER DECLARED THAT THE STATE HAS A CONTINUING INTEREST IN PREVENTION OF THE PROBLEMS ASSOCIATED WITH TEENAGE PREGNANCY AND, TO THAT END, SINGLE YOUNG PEOPLE WHO ARE AT RISK OF PARENTHOOD SHOULD HAVE ACCESS TO APPROPRIATE COUNSELING AND HEALTH SERVICES.

(C) TO IMPLEMENT THESE POLICIES, THE SECRETARY OF THE DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN RESOURCES, WITH THE ADVICE OF THE SECRETARY OF HEALTH AND MENTAL HYGIENE, SHALL ESTABLISH A PROGRAM OF SINGLE PARENT SERVICES IN ALL LOCAL DEPARTMENTS OF SOCIAL SERVICES WHICH SHALL BE AVAILABLE TO SINGLE YOUTH WHO ARE PREGNANT, AT RISK OF PARENTHOOD, OR WHO HAVE CHILDREN UNDER 3 YEARS OF AGE.

112.

FOR THE PURPOSES OF THIS SUBTITLE, SINGLE PARENT SERVICES ARE: COUNSELING ONE OR BOTH PARENTS; MAKING THE PARENTS AWARE OF THE NEED FOR PRENATAL CARE; HELPING IN THE DECISION ABOUT ADOPTION AND EXPLORING THE INVOLVEMENT OF THE SEPARATED PARENT; HELPING PARENTS PREPARE FOR EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING; EXAMINING ALL ASPECTS OF MATERNAL, CHILD HEALTH, AND FAMILY PLANNING AND MAKING REFERRALS TO HEALTH