

What is parent education?

Parenting education programs seek to achieve the following:

- provide parents with the information and skills necessary to promote healthier communication with each other and their children.
- reduce the amount of litigation and conflict between parents going through divorce or separation proceedings.

Can I get excused from completing a parent education program?

The court shall not excuse completion of a parenting education class unless the reason is documented in the record and a judge finds that excusing one or both parents from completing one of the court-authorized programs is in the best interest of the child.

How long are the programs?

Both Focus on Children and Children in Between Online are at least four hours long. Please note: it is not necessary for you to complete Children in Between Online in one 4-hour session, as you will have access to the online classroom twenty-four (24) hours a day, seven (7) days a week during your thirty-day subscription.

What if I receive a default judgment or the court does not have jurisdiction over the other parent?

In the case of a default judgment or lack of jurisdiction over the respondent, only the petitioning party is required to complete a court-authorized parenting education course. However, if the respondent later enters an appearance or participates in post-judgment proceedings, then the party who has not already completed a parenting education course is required to complete one.

Do I need a court order to complete a parent education class?

You **DO NOT** need a court order to sign up for and complete one of the two parenting education programs approved by the Circuit Court of Cook County. If you have minor children, you are **strongly encouraged** to enroll in a parenting education course as soon as possible. You may even complete the online parenting education class 60 days prior to filing your case with the court.