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Statement submitted by Parents Forum in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council*

The Secretary-General has received the following statements, which are being circulated in accordance with paragraphs 30 and 31 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

Statement



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Make Parenting Education Universal

Submitted by Parents Forum

Introduction

Parents Forum believes that universal parenting education can help address many current challenges: mental health and addictions as well as economic inequality, gender equity, educational attainment and work/life success.

Overview

We support policy and practice initiatives that make parenting education available, accessible, affordable and attractive to all parents and caregivers in order to support children's wellbeing and healthy development from birth through young adulthood.

Current economic and health crises, and threats to the health of the planet, cut across many of the Sustainable Development Goals. We see parenting education as an investment in community well-being. Parents cannot give what they do not have. If we want all children to be raised in an atmosphere of curiosity, courtesy and compassion, we must approach parents in the same manner.

Peer-led and professionally-led programming complement each other; many positive and preventive programs incorporate both. Parents need to become informed consumers, especially as their children approach adolescence. Misguided, even damaging, programs exist that prey on desperate parents seeking help for their troubled teenagers.

Parenting education should be: **Available**, especially when children enter and change schools; **Accessible**, with accommodations for disabilities and linguistic differences and offered in locations that normalize participation and by organizations engaging fathers; **Affordable**, at low (or no) cost, with insurance coverage or sponsorship; and **Attractive** to all, through broad-based public health campaigns that highlight the benefits of parenting education at each life stage.

A Way Forward

We invite other organizations in consultative status with United Nations, leaders in education, health care, social services, human resources, faith communities, personal care and fitness and, of course, parent leaders, to join

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us in advocating for universal parenting education. We also welcome support from young people, migrant and immigrant communities, and incarcerated and formerly incarcerated citizens. All of us have a stake in the wellbeing of families.

We encourage organizations to adopt this statement and share it widely. We are convinced that universal parenting education can interrupt intergenerational transmission of trauma, improve the lives of children and increase the capacities of parents and others who love and guide young people. In the process, universal parenting education can help make our communities, and society overall, more resilient and sustainable.

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