



## 104TH GENERAL ASSEMBLY

### State of Illinois

2025 and 2026

HB3619

Introduced 2/18/2025, by Rep. Anne Stava-Murray

#### SYNOPSIS AS INTRODUCED:

New Act

Creates the Keeping Children Safe from Family Violence Act. Prohibits a court from ordering family reunification treatments, programs, or services that, as a condition of enrollment or participation, require or result in any of the following: (i) a no contact order, (ii) an overnight, out-of-state, or multiday stay, (iii) a transfer of physical or legal custody of the child, (iv) the use of private youth transporters or private transportation agents engaged in the use of force, threat of force, physical obstruction, acutely distressing circumstances, or circumstances that place the safety of the child at risk, or (v) the use of threats of physical force, undue coercion, verbal abuse, isolation from the child's family, community, or other sources of support, or other acutely distressing circumstances. Applies the Act to any proceeding involving the support, custody, visitation, allocation of parental responsibilities, education, parentage, property interest, or general welfare of a child. Provides that the Act does not affect the authority granted to the courts and the Department of Children and Family Services under the Juvenile Court Act of 1987.

LRB104 08292 JRC 18343 b

1 AN ACT concerning civil law.

2 **Be it enacted by the People of the State of Illinois,**  
3 **represented in the General Assembly:**

4 Section 1. Short title. This Act may be cited as the  
5 Keeping Children Safe Act.

6 Section 5. Legislative findings.

7 (a) The General Assembly finds and declares the following:

8 (1) Approximately one in 15 children in the United  
9 States is exposed to domestic violence each year.

10 (2) Most child abuse in America is perpetrated in the  
11 family and by a parent, and intimate partner violence and  
12 child abuse overlap in the same families at rates between  
13 30% and 60%. A child's risk of abuse increases after a  
14 perpetrator of intimate partner violence separates from a  
15 domestic partner, even when the perpetrator has not  
16 previously directly abused the child. Children in the  
17 United States who have witnessed intimate partner violence  
18 are approximately 4 times more likely to experience direct  
19 child maltreatment than children who have not witnessed  
20 intimate partner violence.

21 (3) More than 75% of child sexual abuse in America is  
22 perpetrated by a family member or a person known to the  
23 child. Data from the United States Department of Justice

1 shows that family members are 49%, or almost one-half, of  
2 the perpetrators of crimes against child sex assault  
3 victims younger than 6 years of age.

4 (4) Research suggests that a child's exposure to an  
5 abuser is among the strongest indicators of risk of incest  
6 victimization. One national study found that female  
7 children with fathers who are abusers of their mothers  
8 were 6 and one-half times more likely to experience  
9 father-daughter incest than female children who do not  
10 have abusive fathers.

11 (5) Child abuse is a major public health issue in the  
12 United States. Total lifetime financial costs associated  
13 with just one year of confirmed cases of child  
14 maltreatment, including child physical abuse, sexual  
15 abuse, psychological abuse, and neglect, result in  
16 \$124,000,000,000 in annual costs to the economy of the  
17 United States, or approximately 1% of the gross domestic  
18 product of the United States.

19 (6) On April 13, 2023, the United Nations Special  
20 Rapporteur on violence against women and girls called for  
21 a ban on highly traumatizing reunification treatments  
22 promoted through unlicensed, unregulated, for-profit  
23 industries, which result in children being isolated  
24 through extended no-contact orders from the other parent,  
25 family, friends, schools, and communities.

26 (b) It is the intent of the General Assembly to do the

1 following:

2 (1) Increase the priority given to child safety in any  
3 State court proceeding that affects or may affect the  
4 custody and care of children.

5 (2) To prohibit Illinois courts from ordering  
6 reunification treatments, programs, or services,  
7 including, but not limited to, camps, therapeutic  
8 vacations, workshops, and parenting programs, that cut off  
9 the relationship with a parent or sequester the child from  
10 extended family, friends, and community under acutely  
11 distressing circumstances, such as using professional  
12 transport agents that force a child into a threat-based,  
13 coercive environment to address, repair, or remediate the  
14 relationship with the other parent whom the child is  
15 rejecting or resisting.

16 (3) Ensure that persons involved in cases containing  
17 domestic violence or child abuse allegations receive  
18 trauma-informed and culturally appropriate training on the  
19 dynamics, signs, and impact of domestic violence and child  
20 abuse, including child sexual abuse.

21 (4) Ensure training is designed to improve the ability  
22 of judges and attorneys, court employees involved in  
23 family law proceedings covered under this Act, and those  
24 persons appointed by a court to assist the court in  
25 resolving these family law proceedings to recognize and  
26 respond to child abuse, domestic violence, and trauma in

1 family victims.

2 (5) Ensure training that is designed to improve the  
3 ability of these persons who perform duties in domestic  
4 violence or child custody matters to prioritize children  
5 and make appropriate custody decisions in the best  
6 interest of child safety and well-being and that are  
7 culturally responsive and appropriate for diverse  
8 communities.

9 (6) Move Illinois toward becoming eligible for  
10 additional grant funding through the United States  
11 Department of Justice's STOP Violence Against Women  
12 Formula Grant Program, as appropriated for states that  
13 meet the requirements of the federal Violence Against  
14 Women Act Reauthorization Act of 2022 (Division W of  
15 Public Law 117-103).

16 (c) The General Assembly does not intend, by passage of  
17 this bill, to discriminate against parents or children based  
18 on either a parent's or the child's actual or perceived sex,  
19 gender, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression,  
20 race, color, ancestry, national origin, ethnic group  
21 identification, age, religion, marital or parental status,  
22 physical or mental disability or genetic information, or  
23 association with a person or group with one or more of these  
24 actual or perceived characteristics.

25 Section 10. Certain reunification efforts prohibited.

1           (a) Notwithstanding any other law, a court may not order  
2 family reunification treatments, programs, or services,  
3 including, but not limited to, camps, workshops, therapeutic  
4 vacations, or educational programs, that, as a condition of  
5 enrollment or participation, require or result in any of the  
6 following:

7           (1) A no contact order.

8           (2) An overnight, out-of-state, or multiday stay.

9           (3) A transfer of physical or legal custody of the  
10 child.

11           (4) The use of private youth transporters or private  
12 transportation agents engaged in the use of force, threat  
13 of force, physical obstruction, acutely distressing  
14 circumstances, or circumstances that place the safety of  
15 the child at risk.

16           (5) The use of threats of physical force, undue  
17 coercion, verbal abuse, isolation from the child's family,  
18 community, or other sources of support, or other acutely  
19 distressing circumstances.

20           (b) This Section applies to any proceeding involving the  
21 support, custody, visitation, allocation of parental  
22 responsibilities, education, parentage, property interest, or  
23 general welfare of a child.

24           (c) This Section does not affect the authority granted to  
25 the courts and the Department of Children and Family Services  
26 under the Juvenile Court Act of 1987.

1 Section 15. Training of court personnel.

2 (a) The Administrative Office of the Illinois Courts is  
3 encouraged and authorized to establish judicial training  
4 programs for individuals who perform duties in domestic  
5 violence or child custody matters, including, but not limited  
6 to, judges, attorneys, court personnel who are assigned to or  
7 working in cases involving domestic violence or child custody  
8 matters, and any person employed by the court or attorneys who  
9 perform duties in domestic violence or child custody matters  
10 to include, but not be limited to, guardians ad litem, custody  
11 evaluators, mediators, expert witnesses in these matters,  
12 child custody recommending counselors, and others who are  
13 deemed appropriate by the Administrative Office of the  
14 Illinois Courts.

15 (b)(1) The training program described in this Section  
16 shall be an ongoing training and education program designed to  
17 improve the ability of courts to recognize and respond to  
18 child physical abuse, child sexual abuse, domestic violence,  
19 and trauma in family victims, particularly children, and to  
20 make appropriate custody decisions that prioritize child  
21 safety and well-being and are culturally sensitive and  
22 appropriate for diverse communities.

23 (2) The training program described in this Section shall  
24 include a domestic violence session in any orientation session  
25 conducted for newly appointed or elected judges, an annual

1 training session on domestic violence, and periodic updates in  
2 all aspects of domestic violence, including, but not limited  
3 to:

4 (A) Child sexual abuse.

5 (B) Physical abuse.

6 (C) Emotional abuse.

7 (D) Coercive control.

8 (E) Implicit and explicit bias related to parties  
9 involved in domestic violence cases.

10 (F) Trauma.

11 (G) Long-term and short-term impacts of domestic  
12 violence and child abuse on children.

13 (H) The detriment to children of residing with a  
14 person who perpetrates domestic violence.

15 (I) That domestic violence can occur without a  
16 party seeking or obtaining a restraining order,  
17 without a substantiated finding by a child protective  
18 service of abuse, or without other documented evidence  
19 of abuse.

20 (J) Victim and perpetrator behavioral patterns and  
21 relationship dynamics within the cycle of violence.

22 Section 20. Judicial reporting of training.

23 (a) The Administrative Office of the Illinois Courts must  
24 report to the General Assembly and the relevant policy  
25 committees, on or before January 1, 2027, and each January

1 thereafter, on the trainings for judges and other personnel as  
2 required under this Section. The report must include both of  
3 the following:

4 (1) The titles of the training courses being offered.

5 (2) The number of judges and other court personnel  
6 that participated in each training.

7 (3) The nature and extent of the training.

8 (4) The length of the training.

9 (5) Any other documentation regarding the training,  
10 implementation, and feedback of the training.