

Eloise Anderson: Parents' Day: Helping parents work, so children can succeed

Posted on Friday, Jul 20, 2018

The column below reflects the views of the author, and these opinions are neither endorsed nor supported by WisOpinion.com.

This past Mother's Day about \$1.9 billion dollars' worth of flowers and \$2.2 billion dollars in ties and other clothing items were spent to purchase gifts on Father's Day. So, why is it that Parents' Day, held on the fourth Sunday in July, usually passes without anyone noticing?

While Mother's Day and Father's Day are wonderful tributes to the individual parent, it is Parents' Day that should be more meaningful because it recognizes that kids do better when both parents are active and engaged in their lives.

Parents' Day is also an opportunity for us to evaluate what we are doing to uplift and help parents serve as positive role models. At the Department of Children and Families (DCF) is it our job to make sure that parents who are struggling to find a job or stay employed get the support they need to flourish in the workforce and set a good example for their children. In my opinion there are few better ways for parents to be good role models than by showing their children that through hard work, they can achieve almost anything.

>> WisPolitics is now on the State Affairs network. Get custom keyword notifications, bill tracking and all WisPolitics content. [Get the app or access via desktop.](#)

One of the greatest barriers to steady employment for low-income couples and single parents is the ability to find affordable child care. The cost of care is an issue for many families, but for low-income parents it can be especially burdensome. Recently, Governor Walker announced significant targeted rate increases to the

Wisconsin Shares child care subsidy to take effect on October 1, 2018 with an additional general rate increase implemented in January, 2019. These rate increases continue Governor Walker's significant investments in early childhood education following his lifting of the child care rate freeze imposed in 2006, and his reform to end the "benefit cliff" in child care assistance, so that parents receiving assistance are always better off taking a raise or accepting a promotion.

Helping low-income parents afford child care is just one way Wisconsin is ensuring that every parent who wants to work has a support system that allows them to enter, stay, and advance in the workforce.

While there probably won't be many gifts exchanged on Sunday, if we all take a moment to think about what we are doing support parents in our community and commit to giving them a helping hand, this Parents' Day will be more impactful than any bouquet of flowers or even the most expensive neck tie.

- Anderson is secretary of the Wisconsin Department of Children and Families.