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## **International Men's Day and Universal Children's Day: *A Celebration of Fatherhood***

CHICAGO, Nov. 19 /PRNewswire/ -- International Men's Day (IMD) began on November 19, 1999 in Trinidad and Tobago and was recognized by the United Nations as a celebration of positive male role models and their achievements and contributions, particularly to community, family, marriage, and child care. IMD also provides an opportunity to highlight discrimination against men and to promote gender equality. (<http://www.internationalmensday.com/>).

Jennifer Whiteside, Trinidadian and media coordinator for the Fatherhood Educational Institute (FEI, <http://fatherhood-edu.org>) states, "I'm proud that this day dedicated to commemorating the important role men play in their families and the lives of their children originated in my country."

A significant factor in the choice of November 19 as International Men's Day was the UN designation of Universal Children's Day (UCD) on November 20 as a day to observe and promote the wellbeing of children across the globe. The Fatherhood Educational Institute recognizes the placement of these dates next to each other on the calendar as a symbol of the inextricable bond between a man and his child

"I have a difficult time finding words strong enough to emphasize the importance of fathers in their children's lives," says Fathers' Rights attorney Jeffery M. Leving, President Emeritus of FEI. "Research shows that fatherless children are twice as likely to drop out of school, consistently score lower than average in reading and math, are more likely to get pregnant as teenagers, and are eleven times more likely to exhibit violent behavior."

While FEI's mission is to promote fatherhood all year round, the pairing of International Men's Day and Universal Children's Day provides an opportunity to honor fathers everywhere for the role they play in the wellbeing of their children and also help struggling fathers find the resources they need to be the best fathers they can be. Visit <http://fatherhood-edu.org> to learn more about available programs and resources for fathers.

*The Fatherhood Educational Institute is a Chicago-based 501(c)(3) non-profit organization committed to educating fathers about their rights and responsibilities and empowering them to stay involved in the lives of their children.*