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ICC promotes program to help pay phone bills

By CHRIS WETTERICH
THE STATE JOURNAL-REGISTER

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With 5 percent to 10 percent of Illinoisans lacking phone service, the Illinois Commerce Commission is encouraging low-income residents to sign up for two programs that can make having a landline or cellular phone cheaper.

The federal Lifeline program subsidizes landline or cellular telephone service by providing up to \$10 a month for those who meet eligibility requirements. The federal portion Link-Up program pays half of the initial installation fee, up to \$30, for a landline phone or half of the activation fee for a cell phone. The state portion of Link-Up pays \$12.

Acting ICC Commissioner John Colgan said he expects increased use of the program, which has had 266,000 participants during the first quarter of this year, because of the high unemployment rate and tough economic times.

“There are people who have lost jobs who are not accustomed to navigating the waters of public assistance. This would be a program that probably quite a few of them could take advantage of,” Colgan said. “Ten dollars is not that much, but if you’re living on a poverty income, \$10 is serious, real money. I think everybody needs to be connected and this program goes out of its way to make sure that people who are financially challenged can do that.”

The federal program is supported by tax dollars. The state program is dependent upon contributions by phone customers, who can call their phone company and get a check-off box put on their bill to make a monthly contribution.

“It’s based on the goodwill of Illinois people to help out their fellow citizens,” said Bryan McDaniel, a senior policy analyst at the Citizens Utility Board. “Every little bit helps.”

Chris Wetterich can be reached at 788-1523 or chris.wetterich@sj-r.com.

Who is eligible?

To be eligible for Lifeline or Link-Up, individuals or families must receive benefits under one of the following programs:

- Medicaid
- Food stamps
- Supplemental Security Income (SSI)
- Federal Public Housing Assistance
- Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP)
- National school lunch, free lunch program
- Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF)

Source: Illinois Commerce Commission

Signing up

Illinoisans can apply for the program by contacting participating local telephone providers. A list can be found at <http://www.icc.illinois.gov/Consumer/LifelineAndLinkUp.pdf>

For more information on the programs: <http://www.icc.illinois.gov/Consumer/LifelineAndLinkUp.aspx>

Illinois Commerce Commission phone number: 782-7295

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Comments (44)

Fan

1 week ago

Report Abuse

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‘The federal program is supported by tax dollars.’ Another little entitlement brought to you by the Democratic party.

Budman

1 week ago

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Lets also not forget the program that allows up to \$250.00 for car repairs. Maybe us tax payer who actually pay others including our own bills should ask for a pay raise from the fed govt to help us pay for all of these democratic freebies for all of the able bodied who could work freeloaders!!!!

Vet
1 week ago
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A person can have a metered landline for around \$14 here in IL, so why does the state need to give more handouts.

SummerDay
1 week ago
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Doesn't the Commerce Commission have some real work to do that we taxpayers are already paying for instead of encouraging people who can't afford or don't spend their money wisely enough to buy their own phone service - to depend on welfare from others. I'm sick and tired of supporting people who don't work. And, to have our taxpayer funded agencies promoting stuff like this is terrible. Really terrible. Sad stories don't make me generous to the lazy folks who won't work. If I couldn't afford a phone - I wouldn't have one. I wouldn't expect others to pay for it for me.

Have you noticed that those already on welfare have really nice phones - we are paying for those. They don't want the cheep ones. Their kids don't want the cheep ones either - and all their kids have cell phones. It is out of hand. It is wrong to encourage laziness.
tendrfoot
1 week ago
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More Government handouts! Where do I get my free phone? I have a basic phone line for my alarm system, along with dsl, my bill runs \$90 a month with all the State and Federal Rape tax. I guess I don't get Sheet!

americanneedle
1 week ago
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The 'free cell phone' is a cheap one with 250 minutes a month on it.

dj david
1 week ago
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Well Cheap or expensive its our tax dollars at work. And the majority of these free cell phones are probably in Chicago where the criminals get to run their operations on our dime? Way to go DEMS. Just another reason why a guy from Chicago should have never been voted into the presidency. Give them to Seniors who need them for doctors and such not free loaders.

Herself

1 week ago

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Another entitlement program for the 750,000+ illegals in the state of Illinois.

eccdekalb

1 week ago

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While working at a Catholic Church run food/meal center for the homeless last winter I was talking to one of the men about finding shelter for the night. The dicussion was interrupted when his cell phone went off. Only in America.

amazed

1 week ago

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I think to get any kind of assistance you should have to have a drug test, just like getting a job!!

ma23

1 week ago

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I have had to use this 'service' before. I can tell you that when your poor, \$10 does seem like a great deal. It does not make up for the fact that basic phone service cost nearly \$40 a month even after that. Just basic, no long distance, nothing. And when you live on the outskirts of Pekin, there are even places in Pekin that were considered long distance.

There will come a point in time where more families will find themselves living similar to pioneer days. Because rent is sky high already, expecting water and electricity at the same time is apparently just asking for to much.

ma23

1 week ago

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I also have to agree with amazed about the drug testing. I have to disagree with most of the posters claiming that only lazy, deadbeat people who don't want to work use this service and other assistance programs.

I was a single mother whose husband walked out. I had no job, no home, nothing. It took me a few years to even get close to being back on my feet. I used the programs in the spirit they were meant, which is to say that I used them as assistance to get on my feet, not as a permanent means of support.

Oh, and I'm also going to add that when I did start working and was still too poor to afford most things like housing, food, and electric, I STILL paid taxes that went to the SAME EXACT programs. My taxes went to the same things all the upstanding, judgemental people's did.

You shouldn't lump everyone together when not everyone abuses the system.

BC

1 week ago

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These whiners are afraid someone might get something they don't. As long as their tax money goes to murder brown babies in the Middle East it's fine. Don't let any of it be used to help their fellow countrymen. 10% of our citizens are unemployed and there are 5 applicants for every job opening but those left behind are just lazy. The fact that it's near impossible to get a job without a phone doesn't enter their small minds.

eccdekalb.....did it every occur to you that a person who is unemployed may end up in a homeless shelter asking for food. The only contact he has with employers he hopes will hire him is a cheap cell phone.

Then there is the elderly and the sick who need the ability to get help if needed. There seems to be a lot of sub humans among us who would rather see them die alone and get them out of the way.

Helping your neighbor and practicing human decency seems to be liberal while begrudging a crumb of kindness and concern is conservative. Looks like conservative and Christian are words that don't fit in the same sentence.

allyhoop

1 week ago

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Insane. Insensitive. Ridiculous.

You tell me, any one of you, that if you needed it you would ignore the options available. These are hard times. Not everyone can afford everything, not even fifteen bucks a month. I make decisions each month....my medication, which I need to stay healthy....or do I choose to buy groceries? Sometimes it is that serious, that simple, that heartbreaking.

I am lucky. I do not need any aid, at this moment. I have a job that has me livign paycheck to paycheck, but that stil lgets me by. So don't judge what you haven't experienced.

Budman

1 week ago

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I think those of us who have judged, have done so correctly. If you are living paycheck to paycheck..why have a computer and the internet? Bet you have cable, a cell phone, a nice car, I-Pods, XBoxes etc. Yep you have those priorities straight don't you. Get a life...get a job..or 2

noyb49

7 days ago

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Recently, I was in line at the checkout at Hy-Vee, behind a young woman with a cart brimming with food. She was chatting with the checker, another young lady, and telling her about her new 'ink' that cost over \$400. Two on her back and one she couldn't show in public. Got two new piercings too, also X-rated, and cost \$100 for the pair. She then bought a carton of smokes and paid for the whole thing with a LINK card!!!!!! It's all I could do to not go into a rage and let the whole store know what kind of welfare cheat she was and how she had money for ink and holes in her body, but had to have the taxpayers FEED her! The system was never meant to be used to feed the lazy or the stupid.

Hay Seed
7 days ago
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Report Abuse

Hnnnn....

Here we go again!!!! What is the rest of the story? Or better still what is the REAL story?

The above opening line says that 5 to 10% of Illinoisan's do not have phone service. Is that 5 to 10 percent of the people, or 5 to 10 percent of the house holds? There's a big difference. Also, a difference between 5% and 10% is a lot. Which is it?

Granted, the eligibility requirements supposedly are meant to apply to those who may truly need assistance. But....you know there are going to be loop holes and abuses in something like this.

Further, the story reads, that this is a voluntary thing by those of us here in Illinois, by those who do have a phone. For them to check off the box that they are willing to 'donate'.

The remainder is to be from federal tax revenue.

Wouldn't it be nice, if the total was by voluntary means?????

Where's the Red Cross?????

Hay Seed
themrs916
6 days ago
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Report Abuse

would not take a marshall to figure out this one.

cynthia122977
6 days ago
Report Abuse
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Me As a Person to luckily enough get one of this phone yes they are cheap and yes govr paid but I also work full-time and so does my husband. But with the lose of both my parents this year rasing two teenagers and a 11 yr old and being in the hospital for a week it does help cut the cost of one only one bill. of course they are now called the OBAMA PHONES.....They are dishing out all this free phones but think WHAT NEXT? FREE HEALTH CARE PLZ??? It would seriously help pay my 6,500 hospital bill... Which payin 25 dollars at a time Maybe in 10 years i might have it paid off..

ArmyDad
6 days ago
Report Abuse
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Report Abuse

Why do people keep referring to stuff as FREE (phones, health care, etc)? IT AIN'T FREE! It is paid for by TAXPAYERS! My wife and I both work and we DO NOT OVERSPEND. If either of us were to lose our income, the first thing that happens is we cut back on unnecessary things...internet, cell phones, Directv, etc. We don't keep the frilly stuff and expect handouts for necessities. If you have money problems (for whatever reason), cut back on things that aren't important to SURVIVAL. Next, learn MONEY MANAGEMENT. Those of us that do this are getting really tired of paying for those that live frivolously.

Quite honestly, if my wife or myself sustained a short-term job loss, we could survive without giving up anything...because we PLANNED. We have money put aside for such an event, and that money DOES NOT GET TOUCHED for anything other than it's purpose. We didn't go out and get a \$15.00/hr job and finance a couple \$30,000 cars, eat steak every night, and buy our kids \$100 pants cuz 'we love them'. GROW UP FOLKS. Learn how money really works...and please stop referring to all of this stuff as 'free'.

Imagine this...live on LESS than you bring home, put the rest away just such an event such as an economic downturn. Don't honestly make enough? Get an EDUCATION in something that you like that WILL make enough. Make enough but still can't seem to get it right? You can't out-earn stupidity...learn money management, and quit buying unneeded stuff and SAVE SOME MONEY. GROW UP!

nomojoe
6 days ago
Report Abuse

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We throw away MILLIONS of cell phones every day in this country. If a discarded phone has a battery that will hold a charge, even if it is not activated, it will ALWAYS dial 911. If people want a cell phone for EMERGENCY use, as the TV ads state, give them a discarded phone to carry since it will always call 911 in an emergency. To give out free phones with free texting, free time, etc. is ridiculous and a waste of my taxes. If you have to have a cell phone for non-emergency use, GET A JOB!

ArmyDad
6 days ago
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Amen, Nomojoe.

Also, people LOVE to blame the economy for their financial trouble...or Bush...or Obama. But, they never take a hard look in the mirror and say YOU are the problem. It's not the governments responsibility to keep a person's financial house in order. Take matters into your OWN hands. Do it the RIGHT way so when bad situations happen, they have minimal impact on you.

Another one I love...people getting all upset about credit card companies raising their rates, fees, etc. Here's a thought. DON'T HAVE A CREDIT CARD. If you don't have one, they can raise their rates and fees all they want and it will NOT affect you. 'But gosh, I can't live without a credit card.' Sure you can...it's called a DEBIT card. I don't use a credit card. I refuse to use one. The debit card is all I use. 'Well, that's great if you have money.' Ummm...get your finances in order so you'll HAVE some money. And, if you use a credit card, you have to pay the bill. If you have no money, how do you pay the bill?

Just a thought...

As far as this phone program goes, I 'kinda' understand some sort of help for a LANDLINE. But a cellphone? If the idea of having communication for employment is the objective, why does your communication need to be mobile? 'But, what if a potential employer calls me while I'm at the store?' LANDLINE...answering machine...they'll leave a message...

What's gonna be next? 'I found a job but I have no car.' Is there going to be a free/discounted car program? Here's an idea...bicycle (and SAVE money for a car)...and by looking at America's waistline lately, we could all use a little more exercise anyway...

Rockit
6 days ago
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Report Abuse

I believe that nobody should be without the ability to communicate in an emergency, and that doesn't always mean 911. It seems to me that this would be much less expensive if they would simply insist that the programs go for land lines only. There's nothing we can do with the welfare cheats unless we ever do decide to do something intelligent like drug testing or mandatory civil/community service for those who receive benefits and are capable of working. If one is truly out of work and is unfortunate to be one of the 4 out of the 5 who apply for jobs and don't get them, then they are capable of helping the community at least a few hours a week to earn their assistance. If somebody receives HUD, a LINK card, energy assistance and a phone....well, that's the same food, shelter and utilities that I pay for with my income. In other words, they're getting a FREE income at taxpayer expense. They should be made to work for it and we should have the cleanest streets and parks in the world.

In saying that, it's not fair to deny those really in need while we turn our heads and ignore the cheats. The service is necessary to some degree, but not cell phones.
nomojoe
6 days ago
Report Abuse
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Report Abuse

Rockit, I generally agree with what you said with one exception. A phone is VITAL in today's world to communicate with family members, prospective employers, doctors, etc. To give out FREE cell phones to anyone who qualifies, as I do, under the pretense of having it for EMERGENCIES only, as the TV ads proclaim, is ludicrous. ANY emergency can be handled by a 911 call and I defy anyone to name one that can't. I agree with ArmyDad, get your life in order first, then if no matter what you do, you can't make ends meet, then get assistance, but not FOREVER. Mandatory drug testing should prevent those who can't qualify for a job from getting any help. If your drug habit prevents you from getting hired, why should you get any free money from the taxpayers? I pay for two cell phones, one for me and one for my wife and I'm on a fixed income that will NEVER increase in my lifetime. Even though I qualify for a free cell phone, I didn't ask for one since my money management skills don't allow for tattoos, piercings, drugs (illegal), or anything else that seems to be necessary for so many people now. As my taxes go up for more give away programs, and my liquid assets shrink, I will become less able to support REAL charities that do REAL good for the TRULY needy. They will suffer from dwindling contributions since more and more money goes for programs that reward the lazy, the ignorant, and the welfare leeches.

Rockit
6 days ago
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I think you just disagreed with me while agreeing with me. ;) When I said 'that doesn't always mean 911' I meant doctor calls, employment opportunities, etc. I then followed up in agreement with Armydad...make it a land line. You know quite well that it's easy to get along just fine with a land line. You grew up without a cell phone, as did I, so you know it's possible to do. (Kids would have a hard time believing it though)

Anyway....have you considered one of those giant nose rings....maybe the fish hook through the eyebrow? I guess that's all the rage now.
ArmyDad
6 days ago
Report Abuse
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Report Abuse

And I'll go one better for people that complain and having/needng a phone, yet they have internet. Here's a thought. Get one of those MagicJacks. If you already have internet (and I would presume DSL or Cable access), MagicJack costs \$20/year. There's your phone for ya. 'Oh, but I can't take it with me.' B-O-O-H-O-O. Like Rockit said, we grew up without cellphones...you'll be just fine. But, that's a lot of today's people for you (and not ONLY the younger generations)...if it's available to the general population, then I'm entitled to one...no matter who has to pay for it.

Cynthia...I don't understand. You say that you and your husband BOTH work full time, yet you have one of these gov't phones. Ummm...even if you both made minimum wage, at 40 hrs/week, that should put you right around \$35,000/yr household income. You should be able to sustain a living with that. Not pretty, but it can be done...even with 3 kids. Sounds more like a lifestyle/money management problem to me. And, before we get on the bandwagon of 'But, teens need this and teens need that', I have 3 little letters for them. In order...J...O...B. If forced to, I could raise a family of 5 on \$35,000/yr. And if it simply isn't enough in your eyes, then again, your teens can mow some grass, deliver some papers, whatever. They live in your house...thy can have some responsibility of sustaining the household if it is necessary. In the end, you know what you end up teaching your kids? 'You don't have to give 150%, even if it means survival. Just sit back and wait and other people will be forced to help you ...even when you could have done it yourself.' Tell your kids to work and stop taking other people's money.
xburger1
6 days ago
Report Abuse
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Report Abuse

Lets say given the choice Food of Phone, Pick onethis used to be the choice 30 years ago, i have worked almost 3 decades in the coal mines, day and night weeks without a day off. driving sometimes 100 miles to work , i did almost all of this without a cell phone... AMAZING !
MommyofOne05
5 days ago
Report Abuse
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Report Abuse

I agree with armydad about making your teens work. I started working at the age of 16 and from there on out if I wanted something, I paid for it. My mom had three teenager daughters and she could afford to buy us clothes, but maybe not the clothes that we wanted such as the expensive name brands. I had no problem going out and buying my own things and I learned really quick just how important those 75 dollar shoes were when I had to pay for them myself. It taught me to be careful about how I spent my money and to shop for sales as well. Also, I got pregnant at a very young age, graduated high school early, got my own apartment, bought a \$500 car and worked full time at a fast food restaurant to support myself and my child. I didn't have internet, I didn't have a fancy car that I couldn't afford, and I didn't have a cell phone. I had a land line phone. If it is possible for an 18 year old, fresh out of high school to survive, its possible for two adults working full time jobs. I am still supporting myself and my child on my own and the only assistance I get is medicaid for my child (not myself) due to the fact that it would cost over half of my income to provide her with health insurance. I pay for my own through my employer and I am also now a college graduate...all while working full time on a minimal income. Get your act together people. Sometimes I honestly believe that I am more responsible at my young age then half of the parents of my peers.

nomojoe

5 days ago

Report Abuse

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MommyOfOne05, you should be commended for what you have accomplished! BRAVO! Let your example be like a beacon in the night for all the lazy, ignorant, selfish, freeloading leeches that think they are ENTITLED to everything as long as they don't have to pay for it. You should be proud of what you have done with your life and I am sure your child will learn much from your example and will grow up to be a productive citizen. You are one in a million!

ArmyDad

5 days ago

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Report Abuse

Hats off to you, MommyOfOne05! Sounds like there are many people much older than you that could learn from your example. Sounds like you have your head on completely straight. The best part of your story to me is, what you are teaching your child. Just because you probably qualify for more assistance, doesn't mean that you should take it. Outside of health care for your child (which I totally understand), sounds like you are going to give it your all before asking for outside help. I wish more people would take you approach. FAR too many people take he approach of 'I qualify for something, so I'm gonna take it' without first attacking their financial issues on their own. Yes, we would ALL like our bills to be lower, but to take advantage of a system just because you 'qualify', and leaving the bills at the feet of others makes me sick.

Keep up the good work, MommyOfOne05. As life goes on, you will feel much more fulfilled, and your child will learn from your example. If I knew you in real life, I'd like to shake your hand. :)

jagman

4 days ago

Report Abuse

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Report Abuse

I wonder how many of the recipients were a pain in the butt in school? A pain in the butt defined as poor attendance, failure to make academic progress and or behavior problems. Now they expect society to take care of them.

allyhoop

4 days ago

Report Abuse

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I repeat: I have a job. I don't need the aid.

And you go off judging me. I have no computer; this is the library computer. I have two jobs. I have a cellphone because my job is in three different places, but no home phone, no internet, and the only tv channels I have are the ones that happen to come in over those digital rabbit ear things. There you know all about me and didn't even buy me dinner first.

I repeat, I get by on very little. But there are people in this world trying to get by on none and they DESERVE to have a roof over their heads and phone to call in an emergency. Maybe one day -- you will be forced to walk in their shoes. Repeat...don't judge until you have.

BUT THERE ARE PEOPLE WHO DO.

YES, there are people who abuse the system.

But there are also the people who seriously need it.

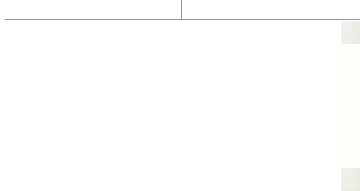
Those people have a job, have families, have lives. They're real people who are really struggling. They're your neighbors, your children's friends, the lady who looks haggardly tired from working overtime in your supermarket. They're the laid off accountant and the laid off bus driver. They come from all walks of life and they are ALL struggling. They deserve the chance to get what they need.

Rockit

4 days ago

Report Abuse

You must be logged in to report abuse.



Report Abuse

allyhoop,....nobody is judging you. Quite the contrary. You've just explained your particular circumstance, although it was not necessary at all, and you've shown that you have made the decisions that allow you to get by, albeit paycheck to paycheck, without having to rely on entitlements.

Nobody really thinks that there are not people and families with genuine needs in this world, but everyone knows that there are those who will abuse the system and take whatever they can get their hands on, genuinely eligible or not, with no thought or regard to A) Who is being denied help because of their greed and B) How much it costs the average taxpayer so that they can eat and live better than most.

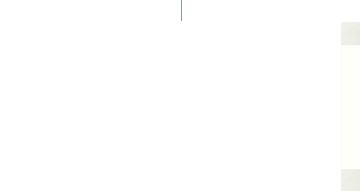
There is something inherently wrong with someone who abuses the system by receiving assistance from every program available, drives a better vehicle than me, picks up handfuls of steaks at the store that I cannot afford, spends countless hours on end at the local taverns and has a big screen television hooked to a dish. You, obviously, have chose not to be one of these abusers but consider this for a moment: How many people do without because of the person I just described? How much of the Illinois debt would be lessened if that person, and countless hundreds of thousands similar, were offered these entitlements only under predetermined stipulations? Do you really thing that drug testing, or asking for a little community service....even 5 hours per \$100 assistance, is too much to ask?

ArmyDad

4 days ago

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Report Abuse

Oh no! Not working two jobs/overtime and are tired! God forbid! Sheesh...most people today would have never survived 20 or 30+ years ago because they have their priorities WRONG. Is it FUN to work a lot and struggle? No. BUT, that's the main goal. Get the job done YOURSELF first. Don't just go work 40 hours at week, and then go home and complain that you have no money and can't afford you bills. Work, and work a lot.

Again, if you have your money managed properly, you can avoid messes like this. Don't have a \$15/hr job and finance cars, and overspend on stuff, overspend on a house, and then when the economy takes a downturn, start complaining that you 'can't pay your bills'. You can pay your bills...you simply can't afford your LIFESTYLE. Cut your lifestyle. 'Oh no. I DESERVE to have a good life!' Only AFTER you set it up properly and manage it correctly.

So cry me a river about having to work a lot and being tired. I'm only in my 40s, and in the past (at concurrent times) ran 2 businesses, married raising 2 kids, went to college carrying 20 semester hours, and did volunteer work...yes, all at the SAME TIME. Here's a thought...put down the remote, turn off the X Box, stop texting your friends at the dinner table, sell the financed overpriced car and pay CASH for something more within your TRUE financial situation, and start engaging your LIFE.

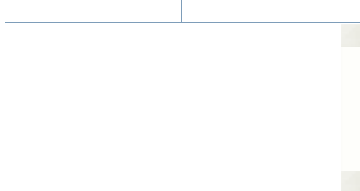
Oh, and before you go off accusing people of 'judging', you might want to remember that those of us who do it RIGHT get judged just as much. 'Oh, you don't understand...you're so lucky...you have this, this and this.' NO, I am NOT lucky. It's called I am not a MORON. I live completely within my means. I don't overspend. I live happily by doing what is right...not by thinking I deserve this and I deserve that. The Joneses next door are broke, so I have no intentions of keeping up with them. I don't 'deserve' to be like them.

noyb49

4 days ago

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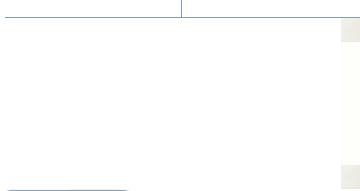


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ArmyDad and Rockit are breathing my air. My work days are past and I am living on a pension now. My income will NEVER increase in my lifetime, so I must use good fiscal policies in my household. I am now enjoying the fruits of my labor and my frugal lifestyle while I was younger. I sent a child to Bradley so that he could have a better life than I had. His degree cost around \$140,000, of which I paid about 10 grand. Why so cheap? Simple, when he was a child I taught him the value of a dollar and the value of a good education. I was on his back constantly to improve himself academically and to excel in everything he did. While in high school, he had a job to pay for his 'wish list' items and his car. At Bradley, he held two jobs, had a full time girlfriend, and still made the dean's list. He had the Playstation, Nintendo, Game boy, and all the rest of the toys any kid wants, but HE paid for them. I encouraged frugality in his finances and forced him to save a portion of his paycheck and put it in an IRA. He will reap those benefits when he is around 59 1/2 years of age. I have cable, cell phone, 2011 car, and we go on vacation at least once a year. I saved every dime I could earn while I worked, preparing for the possibility of lean times. I did not have a job that took no skill to do. I sacrificed for four years, at VERY lean wages, to learn a trade and have a higher paying job with greater job security for the sake of my family. I did not have an ostentatious lifestyle while I was working. We had a modest home, worn furniture, our 'good' clothes were out of style, and we ate more hamburger than steak. We sacrificed for our children and their future and for the

time when we either didn't want to work or could no longer work. What is the point of all this? Simple, it takes SACRIFICE to live a decent life unless you are fortunate to have inherited a fortune or hit the lottery. You think a doctor or lawyer lives any better than you do? Think again. It's all relative. If you spend, say, 25% of your income on housing, so does he. His 25% is a lot more than yours, but it's still 25%. Instant gratification is something that nobody is ENTITLED to. If you want something bad enough, you will educate yourself for FREE in our public schools, get good enough grades to get high test scores so that you can get scholarships to a good school, get a good job, work hard and save for what you want. Sacrifice is a word that few want to even think about. Taking every handout available and sitting on your butt waiting for someone else to share what he worked for to make your life easier is not the way it works. It is never too late to improve your life by the sweat of honest labor and taking control of your life. Living off others gives them control over you. But it also gives you someone else to blame instead of taking responsibility for your own life. I will continue to enjoy what I have earned by honest labor and will not feel a bit guilty about not contributing to giveaway programs unless they are funded by taxes, which I have little control over. When you sit and whine about your situation and continually think you are entitled to a certain lifestyle, don't be surprised if someone tells you to GET A JOB!

ArmyDad
4 days ago
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Right on, Noyb! You are RIGHT on the money about people not understanding sacrifice. You did it as right as possible (we could ALL do a little better, even me), and now you get to enjoy the benefits of your own sacrifice. I guess too many people are also just 'living it up' without the thought of what the future holds (retirement, more economic downturns, etc). Gosh, these will be the same people that come retirement time can't understand why they can't afford to retire, or they do retire and have to scrimp to get by on social security (if it does, in fact, exist at that point in time)...and then complain about those of us who did it right, as we are living comfortably in retirement, taking vacations, etc.

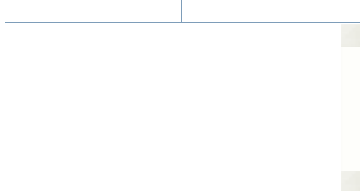
Noyb, I guess you and I will be those people that they call 'lucky'. But, we know better. We made/make the sacrifices during our working years so that we can have a better tomorrow. I'm still right in the middle of my working years, and have many more to go...and I am happy as a clam doing it. And if I tossed my cell phone in the garbage tonight, I could really care less. I have more important things to worry about. LUCK is not a factor.

Noyb, I would HARDLY call paying \$10,000 of your child's college cheap! That's a HUGE chunk of money! You should be proud that you were able to help (which I'm sure you are), and your son should call you blessed (which I'm sure he does).

Heck, what really gets to me are these people that whine and complain about a stupid phone, yet my son is currently enlisted in the Army (HOOAH!) to defend the liberty and freedoms of these folks. Sick, sick, sick. You want something to complain about, go do what HE'S doing! Mommy and daddy (or the general public) won't be running miles a day, YOU will. Mommy and daddy won't go into a room filled with CS gas that you have to breathe, YOU will. So go back to your 'Oh no, what will I do without my cell phone?' lives and consider what other people have done, and what other people are doing.

I think we're slowly shifting from the ME generation to the GIMME generation.

devilshangel61401
4 days ago
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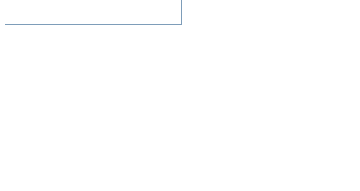
Some good comments some rather rude ones.. Rockit somone did comment to Alley Oop that they bet she/he had a computer internet etc.. I just want ppl to know not everyone who gets public aid abuses it or takes advantage of it. Not everyone knows how to do that or could even live with themselves if they did do that. There are plenty out there who work and still need the assistance even with making huge sacrifices. For those of you who are great at budgeting and know what priority bills should be why not volunteer your time to teach ppl that skill? I was never taught in my life how to budget period until I got involved with DCFS and they gave me a family support worker who spent time teaching me and working with me on learning how to budget. What my priorities should be where bills are concernd. If you don't know how to mangage money properly how can you pass that skill onto your children???

The people that do abuse and cheat welfare and take advantage of the system are hurting not only taxpayers but everyone who truly needs help but cannot get it or does get it and does not misuse it.

Ive known plenty of families including myself that have special needs children and finding day care for them is next to impossible. I've worked two min. wage jobs and sorry to break it to those who think you can live on that, by the time they take out all they take and you pay rent, day care and for transport to n from work in my case it was paying my mom gas money to take me and pick me up since I didn't have a car you don't have a lot left.

Rather than judge everyone by the actions of a few why not realize not everyone on assistance is some lowly deadbeat jerk that does not want to work. One of my neighbors is elderly and I know shes on assistance because I've taken her to the store a few times when her son or daughter has not been able to do so and she pulled out a link card. It is not up to us to judge people everyone's circumstances are diffrent. Also in the days before the government gave out welfare people of the middle and upper classes felt it was their job to help those who had less. There are not a lot of jobs out there right now that don't require a college degree, even people with degrees aren't getting jobs right now. 50 ppl show up for 5 jobs not everyone will get hired. Rather than being so anti-helping others, why dont we all show more compassion for our fellow humans?? Everyone can help in some small way, if you cannot give money, give your time, give your prayers. Offer to take a neighbor who you know does not have a car a ride to look for a job or to the store, buy a few extra groceries nd take them to a food pantry or to a neighbor you know who is struggling. Offer to show someone how to budget properly, talk to them about job traing programs or help them find a way to pay for college so they can better their lives and the lives of their families. Even when my finances are at their lowest I still find ways to help others because that is the way I was raised to care about others as much as I care about myself and my children. I dont feel as though Im entitled to anything, no one owes me a thing I was not raised that way but I don't mind helping those who are truly down on their luck and need help. Be they poor, elderly or disabled. Im not saying it is ok for those who take advantage of or abuse the system to do so because its not ok its flat out wrong. But our system is broken and it needs major overhauling. If you have great ideas and many of you do seem to have some good ones, write your elected officials until your fingers fall off the way I do , call and ask for meetings with them and ask to give them your ideas. Im living outside of Galesburg now but I grew up there and I loved that Galesburg used to have a sense of community that folks looked out for one another Im very sad to see that seems to be dissappering not only in my hometown but all over this country...

ArmyDad
4 days ago
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Develishangel...no one is lumping everyone that gets assistance into one lump group. We are simply talking about the people who abuse the system in ANY fashion. As far as I'm concerned, there is NO need for getting assistance for a CELL phone. Not a phone...but a CELL phone. There are much cheaper alternatives that should be utilized.

Yes, I love to help people...keyword, HELP. I will, not enable lazy lazy lazy people, nor do I appreciate people that use government programs just because 'they qualify'. There ARE jobs out there, folks. I see signs posted at restaurants, etc all the time. 'Oh, but that doesn't pay near what I used to make at the job that laid me off.' So what....again...SACRIFICE more. Ditch the unnecessary stuff FIRST. Don't keep hold of a cell phone (or 2, 3, 4, etc), cable, internet, etc and then claim 'I need assistance'. Yes, there are some totally legitimate situations in which people need help. I'm all for that. We DO have a problem with people that aren't exhausting all of their OWN resources FIRST before going to taxpayer dollars. I guess it's not OK for them to go all out to solve their own 'crisis', but they expect the rest of the taxpayers to sacrifice their hard earned money (taxes) to solve their 'crisis'. I have zero interest in helping people that have too much home, a hefty car payment, cell phone(s), cable, etc, and cry 'help'. Yes, we are in economic turmoil right now. Sell some stuff...get rid of the financed overpriced car. Sell the house and get into a cheaper house (or an apartment). It's temporary. Just until the economy comes back. Then feel free to go back to irresponsible money habits if you choose. The economy WILL come back. But guess what? Many years down the road, we are going to go through another downturn just like this. It's the cycle of economics. Plan for it. Be prepared.

And if you have teens in the house, get them to work, too...even if that means the money they earn goes for the household (not just for them to buy stuff for themselves). Is this popular? No. Would anyone WANT to take this step? No. Not even me. But, desperate times call for desperate measures. Guess what? If it is bad enough to take this step, your kids will learn a valuable lesson...survival FIRST by your OWN means. Not, 'Here Johnny. I know you're 18. Here's a bag of Dorito's that I bought with a link card. Enjoy your Saturday IMing on your PC over cable internet, and playing X Box with your friends.' Grandma used to say, 'There's a great place to go when you're broke...to WORK!' Even if that means that teens have to pitch in. They are part of your household. Get them involved.

ceyorequilter
4 days ago

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I wasn't going to comment on this, as the more I read, the more I got pissed off with people's comments. But, I do want to interject this thought for everyone to read. You are right about a few things Armydad, but there are times when internet and television are the only forms of entertainment that can be had for people with lower incomes. How about getting on to these companies who keep jacking up the prices so that it is harder for people to afford simple entertainment? I use my internet to continue my education in college, and to keep in touch with family and friends. I cant go visit them all, so heck, it is WAY cheaper to maintain relationships with them online, then not at all. How many elderly people have only the internet to see their children? their grandchildren? You are right, it is not a necessity in life, but to some people, it really is. I would rather have my children home watching movies or online with homework, or just chatting then spending money out. I lived the military life, so I know how that all goes. I just wish that people would stop and see both sides of the argument for cell phones and internet in these times. Yes, I grew up without both, but I also know how much society has come to rely on them both as well. If it wasnt for the internet, I would not have been able to watch my oldest daughter graduate from high school. Abuse of these programs meant to help others is offensive to everyone, but unless they are turned in, how is anyone to know? it's so easy for us to say I dont want to get involved in turning someone in for abuse of these programs, but yet complain that people get away with it all. My middle daughter cant work, even tho she is 19. She has a rare disease that keeps her from working. But, she is going to college to at least improve her education. What am I to tell her? no, she cant keep the internet? or her cell phone? What happens to her when she is out without me and she has to be taken to e.r? sorry, but anymore, in some cases, cell phones ARE necessities in our lives now. I am not saying you are wrong, just asking you to see the other side of things as well. Some of us barely get by, but not willing to risk my daughter's health on 'sacrificing' the cell phone, or internet.

ArmyDad
3 days ago

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Please tell me you're kidding! The only forms of entertainment? Here's the first thought. Taxpayer dollars aren't here for your entertainment. Second, buy a deck of cards and a couple board games. They are entertaining, the upfront cost is cheaper than 1 month of cable and internet, and the residual cost is ZERO. Part of the problem is, nobody can get creative. The want to rely on the good ol' standbys.

And not to mention, you are then interacting with your children one on one, which is certainly a good thing. Much better than plopping them down in front of the TV.

Also, we are talking about sacrifices like this could only be for a few months. If you can't handle a few months of heavy sacrifice, then you are weak beyond all belief. Work all you can and cut out the frilly stuff. Someone posted above about 'how about showing people how to better manage their money'. Heck, we've done that and we're getting resistance. Work a lot and cut the lifestyle. And guess what? If you work a lot (and there ARE jobs out there), you won't have TIME for entertainment to worry about spending money on.

Sorry to hear about your daughter's condition, but you can't tell me that there is NO job that she can do. You stated that she may be out and about (which indicates to me that she is walking somewhere), so she can get a paper route. And if her condition is honestly so bad that even a paper route could harm her in some way, then it sounds to me like she shouldn't be out alone, in which she wouldn't need a cell phone. Don't read into this that I am beating up on your daughter. If she can HONESTLY not work due to a condition, then I am all for helping a person like her. But, if there are other any alternatives for her, those should be utilized first.

ArmyDad
3 days ago

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I also forgot to add in my post that there are also work from home jobs that could be pursued. Heck, if members of your family like the internet so much, how about have them research out a home based business that the end result is working on a computer. Free lance writing, programming, etc. Find a wholesaler to purchase from and open up an internet store and/or sell on Ebay. There are a bazillion ways to get creative due to an individual's circumstance. Quit playing the 'woe is me' card. And again, if her condition is honestly SO bad (which is certainly possible), you have much more things to worry about than TV, internet, and cell phones.

themrs916

2 days ago

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we have 3 kids. not once did we pay for a phone for them. they got job. very first thing they did was buy a phone. they also had a paper route when they were younger, to pay for their own name brand shoes and name brand clothes we taught them the value of hard work. we suplied them with shelter, water and food. i taught them everything i could about sacrificing and saving.. their dad taught them the value of honest hard work.

my husband and i were and are far from comfortable, yet everything we did was for the better of our family. it does pay to show your kids the values of life because right know we get to sit back and watch them and by God they paid attention.

btw i delivered newspapers for years and loved it.

OhBoy!

2 days ago

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Eyorequilter, if someone is relying on my tax dollars to feed and house their families, then yes, I do expect them to tell their children (and themselves) that they can't have internet and a cell phone. If your 19 year old daughter can go to college, online or traditionally, she can hold a job. Also, if she is disabled, there are many organizations out there (Google it) that specialize in placing the disabled in work at home jobs. The jobs are there, you just have to look.

saywhatz

2 days ago

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To those of you who are selfsufficient people who are responsible cudos to you . To anyone else who thinks you cant get along without gadgets you are mistaken. These things are luxurys and not necessities toomany people have no clue of what sacrifice really is, But when someone can get others to pay for their phone and cable bills why do without?

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