FILED
OCT 23 1984
CLERK SUPREME COURT

IN THE COURT OF APPEALS OF IOWA

IN RE THE MARRIAGE OF JAMES OLIVER STEELE AND JOAN MARIE STEELE

Upon the Petition of)

JAMES OLIVER STEELE,)

Petitioner-Appellee,)

And Concerning)

JOAN MARIE STEELE,)

Respondent-Appellant.)

431

Filed October 23, 1984

4-335
84-79

Appeal from the Iowa District Court for Polk County - Harry Perkins, Judge.

Respondent wife appeals from the decree which dissolved the parties' marriage, asserting that her child support award is inadequate. AFFIRMED AS MODIFIED.

Joan Marie Steele, respondent-appellant, pro se.

Roger J. Kuhle of Mumford, Schrage, Merriman & Zurek, Des Moines, for petitioner-appellee.

Considered by Donielson, P.J., and Schlegel and Sackett, JJ.

Respondent wife appeals from the decree dissolving the parties' marriage. She asserts that her child support award is inadequate. We affirm as modified.

Petitioner James Oliver Steele and respondent Joan Marie Steele were married in 1975. They have two children: Martha, born in 1979, and Andrew, born in 1981. James is employed with the Wisconsin College of Medicine at Milwaukee, Wisconsin as an instructor and receives a yearly salary of $45,000. Joan had various jobs to support the parties until James finished medical school in 1980. Presently, she is caring for the children and is obtaining a degree in occupational therapy. The trial court awarded Joan custody of the parties' children and directed James to pay child support in the amount of $250 per month per child. The court further directed James to pay $500 per month in alimony for five years. Joan has appealed, challenging the adequacy of the child support award.

Our review of this equitable proceeding is de novo. Iowa R. App. P. 4. While the findings of the trial court are not binding upon us, we view them with considerable weight. In re Marriage of Burham, 283 N.W.2d 269, 274 (Iowa 1979).

Joan asserts that child support should be $500 per month per child. She argues that the needs of the children require the increase and that James has the ability to pay.

In considering Joan's claim that the child support obligation is inadequate, we examine the facts of this case in light of the factors listed in Iowa Code section 598.21(4). We further recognize that both parties to a marriage have a legal obligation to support their children. In re Marriage of Fleener, 247 N.W.2d 219, 221 (Iowa 1976). The obligation to support should be apportioned according to the ability of each parent to contribute. In re Marriage of Heinemann, 309 N.W.2d 151, 153 (Iowa Ct. App. 1981).

Our examination of the record convinces us that the child support obligation is inadequate. Considering the petitioner's financial resources together with the

needs of his children, we believe an increase is appropriate. We therefore modify the child support award to $350 per month per child.

AFFIRMED AS MODIFIED.