

COMPREHENSIVE LIST OF PARENTING ISSUES



THE **Mediation**
mentor®

Parent's Name: _____

This is a list of possible issues involved in family separation/divorce. Please use this as a guideline to sort through the best possible solutions for your family circumstances. Remember that what is the highest and best for the children involved is usually what legal authorities will recommend and will mandate. Please place a number on the line next to the statement using:

- 1 = MOST IMPORTANT TO ME
- 2 = important
- 3 = somewhat important
- 4 = will not affect me

CUSTODY:

- I want Sole legal custody
- I want Shared custody
- I want a Time-share plan

GENERAL SCHEDULE, HOLIDAYS, RELIGIOUS CELEBRATIONS

Weekly Schedule – what days to be with whom? Nights? Days? Who picks up from school, sports practice, etc.

Monday _____

Tuesday _____

Wednesday _____

Thursday _____

Friday _____

Saturday _____

Sunday _____

- Summer Vacation
- Halloween (trick or treating, costume)
- Veteran's Day
- Thanksgiving Day weekend
- Hanukkah
- Winter Break
- Christmas Eve/Day
- New Year's Eve/Day
- Martin Luther King Day
- President's Day
- Spring Break
- Easter
- Mother's Day/Father's Day
- Independence Day
- Labor Day/Weekend
- Child(ren's) birthday
- Parent's birthday
- Other 3-day weekends resulting from legal school holidays
- Guidelines for Flexible Time
 - OK to be initiated by a parent?
 - OK to be initiated by a child?
- Holiday schedule supersedes Weekend schedule? (e.g.: Christmas comes on a different day of the week each year)

Transportation & Responsibility for Meals

- Sharing transportation within _____ miles without renegotiating
- For sharing time with parents
- For medical appointments, extracurricular activities, school attendance
- Who has responsibility for feeding children when exchanges occur at meal times?

Emergencies/unavoidable time changes

- Arrangements when a parent is ill
- Arrangements when a child is ill
- Calling ahead if vary time exchange by more than _____ minutes
- Unavoidable change in work schedule

Parental Decision Making

- Making an effort to work together?
- Major Life Decisions: child(ren's) residence, education, health care providers & procedures, spiritual training, extracurricular sports/other activities

Other circumstances that arise

- Circumstances that are considered dangerous
- Decisions about; haircuts, hair coloring, tattoos, piercing
- Day-to-day decisions
- Address for school records
- Joint school conferences/teacher meetings
- Address for medical records
- Future conflict resolution process (see **Other Considerations** below)

Parental Communications

- As needed?
- Scheduled? When _____? How _____?
- Agreement to discussing difficult issues in front of child(ren)
- Parent agreement to discuss issues: Home phone? Cell? Email? Text? Work?
- Discussing ground rules to avoid arguments
- Agreement on consistent ground rules

Communicating with a child – cell phone/land line?

- At parent's initiative: unlimited/limited reasonable hours _____
- At child's initiative: unlimited/limited reasonable hours _____

Allowing for respectful sharing and caring of parents and extended family needs

- Access to other parent, extended family members
- Not estranging children from other parent
- Refraining from arguing, making derogatory comments about other parent
- Not discussing the financial settlement of the separation/divorce with the children
- Not blaming the other parent for the divorce in front of the children

Substitute Child Care

- Other parent to have first option if child care needed in excess of _____ hours
- Responding to request within _____ hours
- If parent not available, then who:
 - mutually acceptable child care providers -or-
 - alternate child care at parent's discretion

Health and Well-Being

- Stability and continuity
 - same routines (bed and meal times)
 - same expectations (chores, homework, discipline, diet, hygiene)
 - cooperative and unified parenting response
- Discipline
- Notification of intent to take child out of state
- Not using a child to relay a message to the other parent
- Not asking child about personal life of other parent
- Not asking child to keep a secret from the other parent
- Not using a child as a confidante or depending on child for emotional support
- Responsibility for annual medical/dental examinations
- Safety devices: driving, bicycling, boating, skateboards, etc.
- Violence
- R-rated movies
- Alcohol and drug use when child is present
- Second hand smoke
- Guns and other arms
- Changing child's name
- Calling another adult "Mom" or "Dad"
- Child's sleeping arrangements

Children's Possessions

- _ Books, toys, clothes, pets
- _ Exchanged between households? Redistribute as needed?
- _ Kept in separate households?
- _ Packing and returning children's possessions
- _ Needs for special clothing, equipment for particular activity

Introducing and Integrating a child/other parent to a new partner

- _ Discuss when and how other parent to be informed
- _ Proper discussion with child(ren)
- _ Living arrangements discussed

Financial Responsibility for Child's Expenses

- _ Child support
- _ Housing, food, clothing, utilities
- _ Work-related child care
- _ Extraordinary expenses; sports, equipment, lessons, major clothing purchases, school supplies, trips
- _ Review – if income, time, or expenses change
- _ Educational expenses; college, private schools

Other Considerations

- _ Life Insurance – to help raise children if parent becomes deceased – Amount/Beneficiary
- _ Agreement to have a Will drawn up
- _ Percentage of net estate to the children?
- _ Legal guardians
- _ Health insurance
- _ Uninsured health care expenses
- _ Gifts to the Children
- _ Dependent deductions and Head of Household filing status
- _ Future conflict resolution process; Direct negotiation, Gathering information; seeking second opinions, Mediation

Future Review of Parenting Arrangements

- _ How often? Annually? Biannually?
- _ Remarriage or cohabitation of either parent
- _ Change in employment status
- _ Accident/disability of either parent
- _ Family emergency
- _ Child's adjustments/developmental needs
- _ Child's request
- _ Upon recommendation of child's teacher or counselor
- _ What if either parent moves more than _____ miles from the other parent?