



**SCREENING QUESTIONS (REQUIRED)**

1. PARENTING PLAN sessions often occurs with both parents in the Same room together. Do you have any concerns over your safety being in the same room with your coparent?  Yes  No If yes, what CONCERNS?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Are these concerns reduced if a professional is the room at all times?  Yes  No
2. Have the police ever been involved with you and your coparent?  Yes  No  
If yes, please explain? \_\_\_\_\_
3. Have you been involved in more than one relationship where verbal, emotional, or physical abuse occurred?  Yes  No  
If yes, please explain?  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. Are you psychologically intimidated by your coparent?  Yes  No If yes, what intimidates you?  
\_\_\_\_\_
5. Are you physically intimidated by your coparent?  Yes  No If yes, what intimidates you?  
\_\_\_\_\_
6. Are you afraid of your coparent for any reason?  Yes  No If yes, why do you feel fearful?  
\_\_\_\_\_
7. Have you ever applied for a Protective Order?  Yes  No If yes, what was the outcome?  
\_\_\_\_\_
8. Has drug or alcohol use been a problem for you?  Yes  No  
For your coparent?  Yes  No If yes to either, please explain: \_\_\_\_\_
9. Have you ever experienced any of the following from your coparent?  
Verbal Abuse:  Yes  No Emotional Abuse:  Yes  No Physical Abuse:  Yes  No
10. On a scale of 1 to 10 what best describes your level of concern for your physical safety when your coparent is present?  
*Not Concerned at all* *Extremely concerned*  
1      2      3      4      5      6      7      8      9      10
12. Have you ever threatened to harm yourself or to commit suicide?  Yes  No  
If yes, did you attempt self harm?  Yes  No Were you hospitalized?  Yes  No
13. Has your coparent ever threatened to harm themselves or to commit suicide?  
 Yes  No If yes, did he/she attempt self harm?  Yes  No Was he/she hospitalized?  Yes  No
14. Have you ever threatened to hide or withhold the children?  Yes  No
15. Has your coparent ever threatened to hide or withhold the children?  Yes  No

## CHILD ASSESSMENT

Directions: Please complete this section if you have already separated. Make a copy of this assessment for each of your children.

Child's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Age \_\_\_\_\_ Grade \_\_\_\_\_

1. How old was your child when you first separated?

2. When was your child told about the separation?

A month or more before    A few weeks before    A week before    A day or less

3. Who told your child about the separation?

Mother    Father    Parents Together    Parents Separately    Other

4. How was the separation explained to the child?

5. Did either parent blame the other for the separation to the children?

6. How did your child react to the news of the separation?

7. Mark each of the changes your child has experienced since the separation

<input type="checkbox"/> loss of a home (change in homes)	<input type="checkbox"/> loss of activities due to finances
<input type="checkbox"/> loss of step siblings	<input type="checkbox"/> loss of friends
<input type="checkbox"/> loss of step parents	<input type="checkbox"/> loss of other relative(s)
<input type="checkbox"/> loss of contact with one parent	<input type="checkbox"/> change of schools
<input type="checkbox"/> loss of a pet	

8. Additional changes:

<input type="checkbox"/> one parent remarriage	<input type="checkbox"/> both parents remarry
<input type="checkbox"/> more than one move	<input type="checkbox"/> new step siblings
<input type="checkbox"/> "at home" parent goes to work	<input type="checkbox"/> started a new school

Other changes/losses: \_\_\_\_\_

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9. Explain your child's adjustment to the separation, divorce, or conflict

10. Has your child adjusted to the two home schedule?

11. Circle any "transitional behaviors" your child may exhibit when they return from the other house

Tearfulness          Clingy          Irritable          Demanding          Eating Problems          Sleep  
Problems          Discipline Problems          Angry Outbursts          Withdrawn

Other: \_\_\_\_\_

12. Circle the usual recovery time needed by your child before they are resettled.

A few minutes    About 30 minutes    About an hour    A few hours    Several hours    Full day

13. Does your child seem to be manipulating you or the co-parent? If so, explain.

14. Mark on this continuum your discipline or management style with an "S" and place a double "CP" to represent the co-parent's style.

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Minimal limits

Maximum limits

**No consequences**

**Corporal Punishment**

#### **SITUATIONS THAT PUT CHILDREN IN THE MIDDLE:**

15. Have you ever asked your child to pick which home he/she wants to "live in"? Yes No

16. Have you ever asked your child what schedule he/she wants to have between his/her homes?

Yes No

17. Has your coparent ever asked your child to pick which home he/she wants to "live in"?

Yes No I don't know

18. Has your coparent ever asked your child what schedule he/she wants to have between his/her homes? Yes No I don't know

19. Have either of you asked your child to spy on the other parent by probing them about their time at their other home? No My coparent has I have

20. Have either of you asked your child to keep secrets from their other parent?

No My coparent has I have

21. Please rate the consistency regarding rules and consequences between the two homes?

1                                  2                                  3                                  4                                  5

Very similar

Very different

Two united homes

Mom's House vs. Dad's House

**TWO HOME ISSUES**

(Please complete this section if you have already separated)

When and how do the exchanges of the child(ren) occur:

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Description of the child(ren)'s current schedule between their two homes:

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Description of current holiday schedule between homes:

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Description of current school arrangements:

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How is the child(ren)'s property exchanged?

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What phone/internet/text communications is your child(ren) and their other parent allowed during your parenting time?

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What is the distance in miles between homes?

**TOPICS TO ADDRESS IN THE PARENTING PLAN CONSULTATION**

(Please see the attached “Creating a Coparenting Plan” for topics)

1. _____	21. _____
2. _____	22. _____
3. _____	23. _____
4. _____	24. _____
5. _____	25. _____
6. _____	26. _____
7. _____	27. _____
8. _____	28. _____
9. _____	29. _____
10. _____	30. _____
11. _____	31. _____
12. _____	32. _____
13. _____	33. _____
14. _____	34. _____
15. _____	35. _____
16. _____	36. _____
17. _____	37. _____
18. _____	38. _____
19. _____	39. _____
20. _____	40. _____

**Please sign and date below the following statement:**

I understand that Between Two Homes, LLC encourages parents to be empowered and fully informed prior to parenting plan consultation sessions. As such, to save money and time in prior to the first session, I am encourage to complete the live Children in the Middle coparenting class or online Making Two Homes work class.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**The following pages are for your reference  
and do not need to be provided to your  
coparenting consultant.**

## **Coparenting Consultation Expectations of Conduct**

1. Participants will focus on the future and avoid unnecessary discussions of the past. Participants will focus on resolving conflict and not on assessing blame.
2. Participants will listen carefully to the goals that begin every parenting plan consultation session, and will take actions and make decisions in furtherance of the shared goals.
3. Participants will address others in a courteous manner and tone. Participants will not interrupt when another person is speaking. Participants will avoid sarcastic, contemptuous, critical, defensive, or judgmental communication/comments.
4. If a participant feels that progress has ceased or that he/she is about to lose control of himself/herself and say or do something to impede progress, that participant will call for a break. If the break is insufficient to calm the affected participant, the meeting may be terminated.
5. Each participant will speak only for himself/herself. Participants will use “I” instead of “You” sentences.
6. Participants will express their true interests.
7. Participants will be patient with each other.
8. Participants will follow the Agenda for that parenting plan consultation session.
9. Participants will be honest.
10. Participants recognize that arguing is pointless.



**During your parenting plan development, we will use interest based negotiation. Please review the following:**

### **Interest vs. Position**

People often confuse interests with positions. A position is, “He needs to take out the trash on Thursday.” An interest may be creating responsibility in children. There are many possible ways of addressing this interest. One might be setting up chores. Another option might be taking care of something, like a pet. Still another could be organizing a school folder for their homework.

### **Focus on interests, not positions.**

Focusing on interests, rather than positions, makes it possible to come up with better agreements. Even when coparents stand on opposite positions, they have shared interests such as a healthy child.

### **Develop optional solutions**

When developing optional solutions that meet the interests of both coparents, try to meet as many of each side's interests as possible. Start by inviting all sides to brainstorm ideas, no matter how crazy they may seem (before reaching a decision).

### **Some obstacles to developing coparenting options are:**

- Judging and rejecting prematurely
- Searching for a single best answer
- Putting limits on scope or vision
- Considering only your own interests



### **To overcome these obstacles:**

- View the situation through the eyes of your coparent
- Focus on shared interests to make the process smoother for all involved.
- Don't reject any options at first
- Hear the other parent out fully to understand their proposal
- Look for meaningful opportunities, not simple solutions
- Welcome diversity

### **After listing your options:**

***Evaluate*** - Only after both coparents have finished listing options, should the options be discussed. Determine together which ideas are best for satisfying various interests. Talk about likes or dislikes about each option. The options that each of you dislike can be crossed out. Then each of you can predict the consequences that might follow upon choosing each option and cross out those whose consequences may be undesirable.

## CHILD FRIENDLY VOCABULARY

Remember words such as possession, custody, and visitation were designed for judges and attorneys, not parents or other professionals. For family friendly words consider the following:

1. Replace the word **visit** with **the other home**.

*For example, when talking to your child say, “When you are in your other home” rather than “When you visit your mother.” Or if you are talking to someone else instead of saying, “when they visit their father,” say, “When they are in their other home.”*

2. Replace the word **custody** or **conservatorship** with **parenting**.

*For example, instead of saying, “I have custody,” or, “We have joint,” say, “We share the responsibility of raising our child.”*

3. Replace the word **possession** with **responsibility**.

*For example, instead of saying, “It’s my period of possession,” say, “It’s my period of responsibility.”*

4. Replace the word **my ex** with **their parent**.

*For example, instead of saying, “I need to call my ex-husband,” say, “I need to call her father.”*

5. Replace the word **custody arrangement** with the word **parenting plan**.

*For example, instead of saying, “Well, that’s our custody arrangement,” say, “We follow a parenting plan.”*

6. Replace the word **my child** with **our child**.

*For example, instead of saying, “You need to take my son to the doctor,” tell the other parent, “I think our son needs to see a doctor, can you take him?”*

### MOVE AWAY FROM THE LITIGATION LANGUAGE AND MENTALITY



Instead of “***I am fighting for primary possession of my child***”

Use “***We are creating a solution to raise our child between two homes.***”

## **RULES FOR COPARENTING**

1. **At all times**, the decisions made by the parents will be for your child's psychological, spiritual, and physical well-being and safety.
2. **Do** make and confirm parenting-time arrangements beforehand between the parents without involving your child.
3. **Do** notify each other in a timely manner of any need to deviate from the schedule between homes, including canceling time with your child, rescheduling, and punctuality.
4. **Do** communicate with your coparent and make similar rules in reference to discipline, routines, sleeping arrangements, and schedules between homes. *Appropriate* discipline should be exercised by mutually agreed upon adults.
5. **Do** keep your coparent informed of any scholastic, medical, psychiatric, or extracurricular activities or appointments of your child.
6. **Do** keep your coparent informed at all times of your address and telephone number. If you are out of town with your child, **do** provide your coparent the basic travel itinerary and a phone number so that you and your child may be reached in case of an emergency.
7. **Do** refer to your coparent as your child's "mother" or "father" in conversation, rather than using "my ex."
8. **Do not** talk negatively, or allow others to talk negatively, about the other parent, his or her family and friends, or his or her home within hearing range of your child. This includes belittling remarks, ridicule, or bringing up allegations, whether *valid or invalid*, about issues involving the adults in the coparenting relationship.
9. **Do not** question your child about your coparent, the activities of your coparent, or regarding your coparent's personal life. In other words, do not use your child to spy on the other parent.
10. **Do not** argue or have heated conversations when your child is present.
11. **Do not** try to "win your child over" at the expense of your child's other parent.
12. **Do not** schedule extracurricular activities for your child during the other parent's time without your coparent's consent. However, **do** work together to allow your child to be involved in such activities.
13. **Do not** involve your child in adult issues and conversations about custody, the court, or the other parent.
14. **Do not** ask your child where he or she wants to live.
15. **Do not** attempt to alienate your coparent from your child's life.
16. **Do not** allow stepparents or others to negatively alter or modify your relationship with your coparent.
17. **Do not** use phrases that draw your child into your issues or make your child feel guilty about the time spent with the other parent. **Do not** say "I miss you!" **Do** say, "I love you!"

## Creating a Coparenting Plan

So how do you create and maintain consistency and continuity between homes?

You and your coparent can create a coparenting plan. Often what I see in my work with families is that families do not plan ahead. They wait until something is not working to address the problem. Or, they proceed on assumptions, which may result in more conflict and lead to more litigation.

A plan helps provide a roadmap for others. For example, a stepmother would likely not cut her stepdaughter's hair to her ears when it's been at her waist if the parents have an agreement that states, "The parents must mutually agree to significant changes in the child's physical or cosmetic appearance."

A good parenting plan:

- Is a written plan.
- Provides future solutions to help parents avoid pitfalls.
- Promotes trust.
- Promotes continuity and stability.
- Helps stepparents and other family members by providing a road map.

A coparenting plan is a contract agreed to by you and your coparent that establishes guidelines both homes will follow.

Bear in mind that people change. Rules change, living situations change, and people move on to new relationships. A coparenting plan addresses many of these pitfalls and helps keep you out of court and out of conflict with the other parent. Because dividing time between adults requires a great deal of trust between the coparents, a coparenting plan in a large way promotes this security because you have agreed on certain guidelines. The age of the child, of course, has a great bearing on how detailed you need to be in terms of your plan. Young children *need* consistency between homes. Older children are more adaptable, but may require more rules.

Coparenting plans help future relationships because the plan allows the significant others in your present or future to read what you agreed on and decide whether they can honor that agreement. If not, they are not likely the right choice to be a stepparent. Additionally, you will be less prone to follow a different path when you have a plan of action.

It would be very difficult for someone else to create the best parenting plan for each of you and your child. Coparenting plans are created to document the ongoing coparenting and family rules that do not and should not end just because an intimate relationship has ended or because there is conflict between the coparents. Even the "experts" don't always agree on very important issues that are fundamental to coparenting. For example, what type of discipline is best, should the child sleep with you or not, and so on.

When creating a parenting plan, a good question to ask yourself is, "How would

we have handled this if we both lived together?” Generally, if the answer now differs because there are two homes, ask yourself, “Why is it better for our child to do this differently?” and “Is it possible to handle the situation the same way we would have if we lived together?” For example, examine such questions as:

- Who do I ask to watch our child if I can’t be with the child during my parenting time? Generally, if you still lived together, you’d ask your coparent first before you asked family, friends, a nanny, or a babysitter.
- Would I let our child spend time with friends if I were seeing him or her every day? Generally, yes, you would. In fact, you’d probably be saying, “Go out and play.”
- Where would our child sleep if we still lived together? The way you did it before should be continued unless both parents mutually agree otherwise.

You know your child better than anyone else, and both parents know what direction they want to raise the child in. A coparenting plan should cover at least some of the following areas and provide answers to the following questions:

- **Bed Time and Routines** – Bath before bed? Reading before bed? Where does your child sleep, alone or with someone? Does your child use a blanket or pacifier? Does your child sleep in a crib or bed? What do you do in the middle of the night when your child cries; do you put your child in your bed, or do you comfort your child to sleep in his or her own bed? Does your child listen to music while going to sleep? Does your child have a nightlight?
- **Discipline** – Rewards and punishment: How do you give praise: vocally, or through gifts, an allowance, charts, and so on? What are the consequences for behaviors you do not want your child to engage in? Do you use corporal punishment? Do you give your child a time-out, send your child to his or her room, put your child in the corner, ground him or her (and if so, for how long and for what consequences), do you remove some of your child’s privileges, and so on? Will you use carry-over discipline between the two homes? (For example, if the child has been grounded in one home and the grounding period isn’t over before the exchange, does the grounding carry over to the other home?) Will you use a behavioral chart in both homes?
- **Relationships** – If you are not divorced, should you wait until after the divorce is finalized prior to introducing your child to a new significant other, and if so, how long after? What is the minimal time you date someone prior to introducing or reintroducing your child to that person? What do you want to make sure potential significant others know about your agreement before they decide to become involved? Will you define what terms your child may use when referring to stepparents (first name, Mom/Dad, or Stepmom/Stepdad), or will you allow your child to make that decision?
- **Daily Routines** – For younger children, what are the daily routines? What

baby care products do you use? What diapers? What formulas? When do you switch foods? When and how do you potty train? Will you use a pacifier or walker? What is your child's bedtime? Will your child sleep with adults or in his or her own room?

- **Illness** – If your child is sick, do you still exchange? Should you keep a medicine checklist, so you are giving medicines about the same time and noting reactions to the medications? Should each of you be able to attend doctor's appointments, and should each of you be notified in advance (barring an emergency) of upcoming appointments?
- **Special Needs** – Does your child have special needs? Do both coparents need to attend child-related appointments together? Will your child's special needs affect the schedule between homes? Do you need to duplicate medical items, such as nebulizers? Will one parent be the primary caretaker, or will you both be equal caretakers?
- **Cell phone and Internet** – At what age, if ever, do you both agree you will allow your child to have a cell phone or access the Internet? What are the rules in both homes for cell phone and Internet usage? Can either of you post pictures of or information about your child on the Internet, and if so at what age and what kind of information?
- **Extracurricular Activities** – Do you both need to agree per enrollment period before enrolling your child, especially in events that might occur during the other parent's parenting time? Do you both need to agree prior to removing your child from an activity? Should you tell your child you support an activity before you talk to the other parent? If an event, such as a wedding, occurs during the other parent's parenting time, should your child be excused from his or her extracurricular activity?
- **Religion** – Will your child be raised in one faith, two faiths, or with no religious training? Will those values change, depending on who each parent is in a relationship with? Are there specific religious days that need to be incorporated into your plan? Are there specific values you want to incorporate into your plan? Do you need to mutually agree on religious activities and practices?
- **Supervision** – What are your limits on adult supervision of your child? Can your child ride bicycles in the street alone? Can your child run down the block to a neighbor's? Does your child need to check in with you upon arrival? Who are considered appropriate supervisors for the child? (All relatives, some relatives?) Do nannies or babysitters have to be approved by both parents before being hired? At what age can your child be left home alone and for how long?
- **Terminology** – What words will you use (“visiting,” “living with,” “when you are at your other home”)? Will you refer to the other parent as “her mother/father” or as “my ex”? What terms are appropriate for each parent and for other relatives?

- **Peer Relationships** – Can your child still have sleepovers and independent relationships with friends near the home of their mother/father during the other parent’s parenting time?
- **Other Family Members** – Will your child be able to see all family members independent of which parent he or she is with, or will your child spend time only with maternal family during maternal time and vice versa? Will all family members be invited to your child’s birthday parties? Are there family members your child should not see or who your child should always be supervised with?
- **Child Care** – Will you use one child-care provider, daycare, and nanny, or two? What age does a child-care provider need to be? Should you offer the other parent the opportunity to care for your child before you offer it to anyone else? Does the “anyone else” include grandparents, stepparents, and live-ins or not? Do you offer the opportunity for a span of two hours or more, or only if you will be gone overnight?
- **Trips** – If your child will be out of the area during your parenting time, do you need to provide your coparent with the basic travel itinerary? If so, what needs to be included in the notice? How far in advance do you need to provide the information? At what age can your child travel alone?
- **Professional Services** – Who will make decisions regarding the professionals who provide services for your child? Will those decisions be made jointly or by just one parent? Will one parent make the education decisions and the other the medical? Should both parents be listed as contacts on professional forms completed for your child?
- **Online tools** – Will you both use online tools to help you in shared parenting? Will you use e-mail to communicate agreements? Will you use any coparenting programs, such as [www.ourfamilywizard.com](http://www.ourfamilywizard.com)?
- **Distance** – Will you have a geographical restriction regarding where your child will reside? Will there be a maximum distance between the two homes?
- **Schedule** – What schedule will your child have between the two homes? Will the school year schedule be different than the summer schedule? Will the schedule change as your child matures? What voice, if any, will your child have in that schedule? Does the schedule change depending on the distance between homes?
- **Holiday Schedules** – How do you celebrate? Will one parent have Christmas Eve and the other Christmas Day? Do you rotate Christmas Day and Eve with one parent one year and the other the next? Which holidays do you observe? Do you have religious issues related to holidays? What will be the schedule on your child’s birthdays or on either parent’s birthday? What will you do when there are federal holidays or when school is not in session due to a teacher in-service day?
- **School Work and Study Habits** – Will you use the same routine in both homes for dealing with homework or studies? How do you handle a project that may take longer than a day for your child to complete? If necessary, does that

project transfer between homes?

- **Car** – Do you need to create a mutually agreed upon driving contract for your teen? Will the car be the teen's car, or will it be a car you are letting them borrow? Will the teen's behavior affect his or her use of the vehicle? Who will teach your teen to drive?
- **Child's Property** – What do you do with your child's clothes? Do each of you keep equal stock, or does one send a suitcase with all of your child's belongings?
- **Stepparents** – What do you want to make sure potential significant others know about your agreement before they decide to become involved as a stepparent? Should stepparents be present at appointments for your child (doctor, school, and so on) without the mutual agreement in advance of the parents? Should stepparents take on the role of exchanging the children? Should stepparents be involved in calling or e-mailing the other household in nonemergency situations without agreement of both parents?
  - Should stepparents schedule appointments for your child? Should stepparents be consulting with professionals for your child without the mutual agreement of both parents? Should stepparents be listed as contacts on important information for your child?
  - What are mutually agreed-upon boundaries both parents want stepparents to respect? Should stepparents talk to your child about subjects such as drugs, sex, religion, and so on? Should stepparents be allowed to discipline your child, and if so, what are the limits?
  - Should your child remain with the stepparent if you are not present to care for your child during your parenting time, or should the coparent be asked first if he or she would like to care for your child? Should your child be allowed to sleep in the same bed with a stepparent whether or not one of the parents is in the bed? How should a stepparent act when the other parent is present?
- **Child Care Expenses** – An important component of a coparenting plan addresses the finances of raising a child. Kids are *very* expensive! Will one parent pay some to the other to cover the child's expenses? Will bills be split or covered by one parent? How will school activities or extracurricular events be covered? What about expenses for extracurricular activities, scholastic events, religious events, and college? How will medical, dental, or optical expenses be covered? Who will cover the health insurance for your child, and how will the cost of the insurance be addressed?
- **Decisions** – Who will make final decisions when all else fails, or what steps will you take before bringing issues to court (for example, will you try consultation)?



The following is a sample of a creative, nonstandard parenting plan. It is not intended to be your parenting plan; in fact, there are items in this agreement that likely will not work for your parenting plan. However, it is an example of how creative your plan can be.

## **SAMPLE PARENTING PLAN**

### **Our child is entitled to enjoy the following rights:**

1. The right to be treated as an important human being, with unique feelings, ideas, and desires, and not as a source of argument between parents.
2. The right to a sense of security and belonging derived from a loving and nurturing environment that shelters him or her from harm.
3. The right to a continuing relationship with both parents and the freedom to receive love from and express love for both.
4. The right to parents who will listen to and show respect for what their child has to say.
5. The right to express love and affection for each parent without having to stifle that love because of fear of disapproval by the other parent.
6. The right to grow and flourish in an atmosphere free of exploitation, abuse, and neglect.
7. The right to know their parents' decision to divorce is not the child's responsibility and he or she will still be able to live with each parent.
8. The right to continuing care and guidance from both parents where the child can be educated in mind, nourished in spirit, and developed in body, in an environment of unconditional love.
9. The right to receive developmentally appropriate answers to questions about changing family relationships.
10. The right to know and appreciate what is good in each parent without one parent degrading the other.
11. The right to have a relaxed, secure relationship with both parents without being placed in a position to manipulate one parent against the other.
12. The right to have one parent not undermine time with the other parent by suggesting tempting alternatives or by threatening to withhold activities with the other parent as a punishment for the child's wrongdoing.
13. The right to be able to experience regular and consistent parental contact and the right to know, in a developmentally appropriate manner, the reason for not having regular contact.
14. The right to be a child and to be insulated from the conflicts and problems of the parents.
15. The right to be taught, according to developmental levels, to understand values, to assume responsibility for his or her actions, and to cope with the just consequences of his or her choices.
16. The right to be able to participate in his or her own destiny.

17. The right not to be used as a messenger or spy between parents.

### **Residence of the Child**

Billy's domicile is restricted to the Arlington Independent School District. Until such time as Billy has his own car and is able to drive, the parents will reside no more than two miles doorstep to doorstep from each other. Once Billy has his own car and is able to drive, the parents will reside not more than ten miles doorstep to doorstep.

### **Parenting Time Schedule**

Failing mutual agreement,

#### **1. General weekly schedule:**

Week 1: The father will be responsible for Billy from the time school is released on Tuesday until 7:30 p.m., when he is picked up by his mother, and from the time school is released on Thursday until school resumes on Friday morning.

Week 2: The father will be responsible for Billy from the time school is released on Thursday until he returns Billy to his other home at 6:00 p.m. on Sunday.

Beginning when Billy reaches seven years of age and thereafter,

Week 1: The father will be responsible for Billy from the time school is released on Tuesday until 7:30 p.m., when he is picked up by his mother, and from the time school is released on Thursday until school resumes on Friday morning.

Week 2: The father will be responsible for Billy from the time school is released on Thursday until school resumes Monday morning (or the next day school resumes if Monday is a holiday).

The mother will be responsible for Billy at all other times not otherwise addressed.

#### **2. Holidays:**

##### *Thanksgiving*

Each year, the mother's parenting time will begin at 2:00 p.m. the Tuesday preceding Thanksgiving and end at 3:00 p.m. Thanksgiving Day when she delivers Billy to his other home. The father's parenting time will begin at 3:00 p.m. Thanksgiving Day and continue until he returns Billy to his other home at 6:00 p.m. the Sunday following Thanksgiving.

### *Christmas*

Even years – Billy will be with his mother from the time school lets out for Christmas break until 4:00 p.m. Christmas Eve, with his father from the 4:00 p.m. Christmas Eve until 3:00 p.m. Christmas Day, with his mother from 3:00 p.m. Christmas Day until 7:00 p.m. Christmas Day, and then with his father from 7:00 p.m. Christmas Day until school resumes after Christmas vacation.

Odd years – Billy will be with his father from the time school lets out for Christmas break until 4:00 p.m. Christmas Eve, with his mother from 4:00 p.m. Christmas Eve until 3:00 p.m. Christmas Day, with his father from 3:00 p.m. Christmas Day until 7:00 p.m. Christmas Day, and then with his mother from 7:00 p.m. Christmas Day until school resumes after Christmas vacation.

### *Spring break*

Odd years – Billy will be with his father from the time school is released for spring break until the time school resumes.

Even years – Billy will be with his mother from the time school is released for spring break until the time school resumes.

### *Father's Day/Mother's Day*

Billy will be with his father from the time school is/would be released for Father's Day weekend until the time school resumes.

Billy will be with his mother from the time school is/would be released for Mother's Day weekend until the time school resumes.

### *Monday federal holidays and other days school is not in session*

If a school or federal holiday falls on a Friday, Billy's time with the parent whose parenting time is on the weekend will begin on Thursday when school is released. If a school or federal holiday falls on a Monday, Billy's time with the weekend parent will end when school resumes on Tuesday.

If the parent who has parenting time with Billy on a federal holiday has to work on that federal holiday and that parent does not take the day off but the other parent is off work, the parent who is off work shall have the right to parenting time with Billy beginning at the time that Billy's school begins and ending at 7:00 p.m. that same day, provided that the parent who is exercising parenting time with Billy on the federal holiday picks up Billy from the other parent's residence and the other parent picks up Billy from the parent's residence at 7:00 p.m.

### *Independence Day*

Even years – Billy will be with his mother from 7:00 p.m. July 3 until 7:00 p.m. July 5.

Odd years – Billy will be with his father from 7:00 p.m. July 3 until 7:00 p.m. July 5.

*Halloween-*

Odd years – Billy will be with his mother from the time school is/would be released for Halloween until the time school resumes/would resume the following day.

Even years – Billy will be with his father from the time school is/would be released for Halloween until the time school resumes/would resume the following day.

The parents agree when possible they will both take Billy trick-or-treating together.

*Summer*

Prior to age ten, Billy will continue the regular school schedule with the exception that the father may elect by May 1 fourteen consecutive days of parenting time during the summer, provided it does not interfere with any otherwise addressed parenting time. The mother may elect by May 15 seven consecutive days of parenting time, provided it does not interfere with any otherwise addressed parenting time.

At and after age ten, Billy will continue the regular school schedule with the exception that the father may elect by May 1 fourteen consecutive days of parenting time during the summer, provided it does not interfere with any otherwise addressed parenting time. The mother may elect by May 15 fourteen consecutive days of parenting time, provided it does not interfere with any otherwise addressed parenting time.

*Children's/Parent's Birthdays*

Billy will be with his father from the time school is/would be released for the day before his father's birthday until the time school is/would be released the day following his father's birthday.

Billy will be with his mother from the time school is/would be released for the day before his mother's birthday until the time school is/would be released the day following his mother's birthday.

On his birthday, Billy will be with the parent who would not have parenting time

with him from the time school is/would be released until 6:00 p.m., when he is returned to his other home.

### **3. Additional Topics**

1. The parents will not schedule activities for Billy during the other parent's parenting time without the advance mutual agreement of the other parent.
2. To the best of their ability, the parents will not involve or let Billy overhear conversations about possible schedule changes for parenting time without the advance consent of the other parent.
3. The parents will maintain the same sleep routine until such time as both parents mutually agree otherwise.
4. The parents will encourage Billy to call the other parent each night to say goodnight until otherwise mutually agreed upon.
5. Prior to any significant changes in Billy's physical appearance, both parents must mutually agree upon on such changes.
6. Dating provisions:
  - a. The parents must actively date a significant other no fewer than six months prior to introducing that person to Billy.
  - b. The parents will not introduce Billy to a significant other prior to seven months after the final decree is signed by the judge.
  - c. For the following six weeks after Billy's initial introduction to a significant other, all meetings between Billy and the significant other will be with a parent and in a public location.
  - d. After the six weeks of Billy's introduction to a significant other, the relationship between Billy and that person will grow at a gradual pace.
  - e. During a parent's parenting time, his or her significant other will depart the home, hotel room, or other sleeping location of Billy or his parent prior to Billy going to bed and will not return until after Billy wakes up in the morning for at least a period of six months after the introduction to Billy.
7. The parents will allow Billy to refer to a stepparent by any respectful terms (such as the stepparent's first name, Stepmom/Stepdad, or Mom/Dad) that Billy is comfortable with, without influence of either parent or any stepparent.
8. The parents will not leave Billy unsupervised until Billy reaches an age mutually agreed upon by the parents and for durations agreed upon by the parents.
9. If a parent will not be available for eight hours or more during his or her parenting time, that parent will offer the other parent the first right to care for Billy over all other individuals, including relatives. The parent offering the first right to care will specify the hours of care needed, and may elect another person to care for Billy if the other parent is not available during those hours. The parent accepting the first right will be responsible for picking up and returning Billy at the hours designated by the requesting parent. The parents

- will not ask each other why they are being offered the first right, but instead will simply accept or deny the opportunity. This agreement does not apply:
- a. To travel or when there are family functions and events such as weddings, funerals, or reunions.
  - a. When Billy is engaged in activities with peers at his initiated request, such as a peer sleepover.
10. If Billy will be out of the local area for one night or more, the parent who has arranged the travel will provide the other parent Billy's travel itinerary prior to departure.
  11. Either parent may call, e-mail, or text Billy during Billy's time with his other parent during reasonable hours and at a reasonable volume per day.
  12. Billy will be allowed to call, e-mail, or text either parent during reasonable hours and at a reasonable volume per day.
  13. Both parents will support both maternal and paternal extended family relationships with Billy, independent of either parent's parenting time.
  14. Each parent will notify the other parent within twenty-four hours of the time they schedule or are notified of any medical, psychological, scholastic, or extracurricular appointments for Billy, or immediately if twenty-four hour notice is not available. Each parent will also notify the other parent of any schedule changes or cancellations.
  15. The parents must mutually agree on all extracurricular activities prior to consenting to Billy participating in them and/or enrolling Billy in extracurricular activities, withdrawing Billy from agreed-upon activities, or not taking Billy to such activities once Billy has been enrolled.
  16. The parents will not, nor will they allow others to, purchase a cell phone for Billy until such time as both parents mutually agree on the phone and guidelines for phone usage.
  17. The parents will establish mutually agreed upon Internet guidelines prior to allowing Billy to access the Internet.
  18. Each parent will "cc" the other parent during e-mails to professionals about Billy.
  19. The parents will not, nor will they allow others to, disparage the other household members in the presence or hearing range of Billy.
  20. The parents will not, nor will they allow others to, discuss matter relating to litigation, child support, or court services in the presence or hearing range of Billy.
  21. The parents will not, nor will they allow others to, use Billy as a messenger to deliver verbal messages or physical items between the parents.
  22. The parents will not, nor will they allow others to, probe Billy about his time at his other home or about coparenting matters.
  23. The parents will use two-home friendly vocabulary (such as "parenting time" or "when you are in your other home" or "when you are with your mother") with Billy and in Billy's presence rather than words such as "possession,"

“custody,” or “visitation.”

24. The parents will use a behavioral plan between both homes to address unacceptable behaviors and consequences for these behaviors, and will use carry-over discipline between homes.
25. Information that is readily available (such as online school information) is the responsibility of that parent to gather. Information that either parent receives that is not readily available to the other parent will be provided to that other parent in a timely manner (such as school-picture order forms).
26. The parents will maintain [www.ourfamilywizard.com](http://www.ourfamilywizard.com) accounts to communicate in writing as needed, solidify agreements, maintain a calendar, manage Billy's expenses, and detail his professional contacts.
27. The parents will not ask Billy where he wants to live or encourage Billy in any way to choose between his parents, but will help Billy understand he has two homes.
28. Billy will be allowed to carry his property between homes. However, both homes will maintain primary-care items, such as clothes, hygiene items, and over-the-counter medicines, so that Billy does not have to carry these items.
29. Prior to seeking further nonemergency litigation over coparenting matters, the parties will use alternative dispute-resolution options.
30. The parents will, and will instruct others to, follow the coparenting plan.

For more information about developing parenting plans and parenting plan schedules, as well as other free literature, visit:

[www.afccnet.org/resourcecenter/resourcesforfamilies/](http://www.afccnet.org/resourcecenter/resourcesforfamilies/)