

..... and

shall share the parenting of their children:

Child's name Date of Birth

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Introduction

The parents are committed to the spirit of the parenting plan, which recognises the child's needs for a good and ongoing relationship with both parents, and which calls for shared parenting, with both parents involved in all matters related to the children.

Shared parenting involves two major aspects: (1) how major child-related decisions are made; and (2) the time the children spend with both parents. The primary goals are to minimise factors that produce or promote inter-parental conflict, to ensure smooth implementation of the parenting plan, and to maximise healthy child adjustment. The decisions that typically and most frequently challenge families are those related to day-to-day family management. These include: parental values and morals, clothes and toys, travelling back and forth, parent-child telephone contact, transportation between homes, discipline, consistency and routines, changes and flexibility, extracurricular activities, parental communication, holiday schedules, parenting approaches and exchanges of information.

Shared parenting poses a challenge for most families, as ineffective communication, mutual animosity and power and control issues contribute to impasses. To the extent that it minimises factors that produce conflict, a structured and specific parenting plan is preferred. Such plans provide solutions to day-to-day family management dilemmas and a method for making child related decisions.

All possible changes in a family's circumstances and management cannot, of course, be foreseen no matter how comprehensive or thorough the plan. Children mature and change, as do their needs. Parents may move residence or change employment, remarry or divorce, thus encountering new living arrangements and new family dynamics. Any parenting plan will therefore require revision over time.

In the interests of clarity, when the children are with their father, he will be referred to as the "resident" parent, and when the children are with their mother, she will similarly be referred to as the "resident" parent.



SECTION A Child-related Decision Making

1. *Daily / routine medical*

- (a) The parents shall continue to use the services of _____ or such doctor as is available at the _____ as the children's doctor and will be registered with a dentist at the earliest opportunity. The parents shall provide each other with the names, addresses and telephone numbers of all physicians, dentists or orthodontists providing care for the child.
- (b) The resident parent is responsible for making day-to-day medical decisions (such as when to give over the counter medicines, keep the children home from school due to illness, see a doctor for a minor illness, etc).

2. *Major medical (long-term medication/treatment, surgery, orthodontic work, etc)*

- (a) The parents shall notify each other of an emergency child visit to a doctor, specialist, and/or hospital. Both parents may attend.
- (b) Each parent shall provide written permission to the child's doctor to release information to the other parent.
- (c) The parents shall directly request any relevant records/information from the Doctors and not expect the other parent to provide such records or updates.
- (d) Major medical decisions are usually infrequent. Since they are serious, it is in the child's best interests for both parents to be involved in major medical decisions, with the assistance of the expert third parties, such as medical specialists, dentists etc. The parents shall notify each other of any potential major medical decisions as well as provide the other with the name and number of the attending doctor(s). It is ideal for the parents to consult with the doctor(s) together. However, if this is not possible, the parents may consult individually, adding second opinions as necessary. The parents shall arrive at major medical decisions mutually. If they cannot, they shall abide by the consensus medical opinion, in consultation with the mediator, as outlined below in paragraphs 11 to 15.
- (e) In the event that the children become ill, it is in their best interest to remain with the resident parent until such time as it is appropriate to resume the routine time sharing schedule, as outlined below in paragraph 6. Similarly, a parent who becomes ill should voluntarily keep away from the child, so as not to pass the illness on to them.

3. *Religion*

The parent shall educate and expose the child to the religious tradition in place prior to their separation, and in keeping with the child's best interests.

4. *Education (including school selection, remedial assistance, reports, parent/teacher meetings, etc)*

- (a) It is in the child's best interests if the parents attend parent teacher meetings together. In doing so, the child perceive that their parents are working together on their behalf. This may lessen the child's loyalty bind and curtail any effort on their part to "play both ends against the middle". If either parent prefers to have an individual meeting, each parent shall be responsible for arranging with the school his or her own parent teacher meeting. Any special meetings, involving board or



school personnel (other than the teacher), are likely to require the parents to attend together, as time and resources usually do not allow for separate meetings.

- (b) Each parent is responsible for staying up to date on any relevant educational matters and requesting involvement for any special meetings about the children. Each parent shall request from the school that he or she is provided with all notices, reports etc. If the school cannot accommodate such requests, each parent will continue to notify the other of all school events at the time he or she learns of them. The residential parent who first obtains the child's report shall provide the other parent with copies of them.
- (c) It is in the child's best interest for both parents to attend school related functions, such as open days, plays, concerts, fund raisers etc.
- (d) Major decisions related to the child's education include class placement, remedial assistance, enrichment, etc. Such decisions shall be made in consultation with relevant experts, including teachers, principals, school or independent psychologists, etc. It is ideal for the parents to consult with these professionals together. However, if this is not possible, the parents may consult individually, adding second opinions as necessary. The parents shall make educationally relevant decisions mutually, in consultation with the relevant expert, or experts, if there are different expert opinions. If the parents cannot agree, they will follow the dispute resolution mechanism outlined in paragraphs 11 to 15 below
- (e) The school shall have both parents' names to call in case of emergency. The resident parent shall be called first. If the resident parent cannot be reached, then the non-resident parent shall be called. The contact parent shall notify the other parent as soon as possible.

5. *Community, Athletic and Lessons*

- (a) Each parent may enrol the child and/or participate in the activities chosen by the parent, providing that the activities do not overlap with the other parent's time with the children. The parents shall consult and come to a mutual decision regarding extracurricular activities that overlap both parents' time with the child. Neither parent shall enrol the child in activities that overlap with the other parent's time without that parent's consent.
- (b) The parents shall obtain schedules and other necessary information directly from the instructors or coaches of the activities.
- (c) The parents may attend special events at school and extracurricular activities, such as fairs, concerts, recitals, shows or performances.



SECTION B: Child's time with each parent

6. *The child's time with both parents*
- a. The child shall continue to reside with both parents pursuant to the following alternating schedule

Week 1

- (a)
- (b)
- (c)

Week 2

- (a)
- (b)
- (c)

Half term holidays

- (a) The child shall split the holidays between their parents, spending the first half with one parent, the second half with the other parent, and then alternating this arrangement on a year over year basis.

Easter

- (a) The children shall split this holiday between their parents on an annual rotation, spending Easter Sunday with one and Easter Monday with the other in one year, rotating the next year, and so on.

Birthdays

- (a) The children shall spend mother's birthday with mother, and father's birthday with father.

Father's Day/Mother's Day

- (a) The children shall spend Mother's Day with mother, and Father's Day with father.

Summer Holiday

- (a) The children shall spend two consecutive weeks with each parent in 2012.
- (b) Each parent shall give the other (3) months notice of their summer holiday plans.



Other Provisions

- (a) The children's relationship with their grandparents shall be encouraged by both parents.
- (b) Agreement between the parents as to the time sharing schedule is based on the presumption of equal time sharing, with successive revisions of the current arrangement directed towards that future goal.
- (c) Accordingly, the parents agree to review the current plan in six months.
- (d) Between now and then, the parents shall meet regularly with the mediator to monitor and evaluate the parenting plan, and to discuss progressive changes to the plan with the goal of equal time-sharing.

SECTION C: The Children's clothing and belongings

7. (a) It is preferable for both parents to have adequate clothing for the children. The clothes the children have worn en route to time with the other parent shall be returned (washed or not) and placed in the children's bag when they return to the other parent.
- (c) The children's belongings belong to them. They shall have the option of taking toys, computer games, etc back and forth if they wish. They shall be encouraged to assume responsibility for these items by remembering to bring and return them as they desire.
- (d) Major sporting items, dress clothes, and other expensive items shall travel back and forth with the children as they desire or upon the written request of the other parent. The items shall be promptly returned with the children. If an item is damaged or broken, the parent who had the item when the damage occurred shall be responsible for replacing the item. The children may also be expected to assume some responsibility as determined by the resident parent at the time.

SECTION D: Telephone

The children may call the non-resident parent, whenever they wish. The parent may call the children whenever he or she wishes, with proper consideration given to meal times and bedtime. Suggestions for good times to call may be placed in the communication book (see paragraph 9 below).

SECTION E: Travel, Residential Moves

- (a) Two months written notice shall be provided to the other parent is a residential move is planned.
- (b) The phone number(s) of the children's whereabouts when travelling away from either parent's residence shall be provided in writing to the non-resident parent in case of emergency.



SECTION F: communication, Flexibility, Changes*Communication*

- (a) On a weekly basis, mother shall telephone father, or vice versa, to communicate about the children's weekly experience (including upsets, special events, etc). The children shall benefit knowing both parents are aware of these significant events. Also, the children shall be less likely to "play both ends against the middle" when he knows his parents communicate regularly about him.
- (b) In addition to weekly telephone calls, the parents may use a communication/information book that shall travel with the children back and forth to each parent's home. This book may include, but is not limited to, the following: parenting plan, names and addresses of coaches and instructors, schedules of lessons and sports, immunization record, health card numbers, dates and reasons for medical visits, other medical information, current prescriptions, discipline/structure routines, and any other child-related information. This book may be especially useful in that it provides one place to store relevant child-related information.
- (c) The children shall not be asked by their parents to relay information from parent to parent.

10. *Changes to Schedule*

- (a) Should the need arise, the parents shall communicate verbally and/or in writing as to a request(s) for a change to the usual or holiday schedule. They will do so with as much notice as possible. A verbal or written response shall be provided within 48 hours.
- (b) Each parent shall canvass changes to the schedule, first with the other and prior to mentioning anything to the children about a change and/or a special activity.
- (c) If additional time is required due to a special event or celebration, notice shall be provided to the other parent when the need arises and/or two weeks in advance. A response shall be provided within 24 hours.
- (d) As a rule, the parents shall not be entitled to make up time if they request a change. Notwithstanding this rule, make up time may be offered.
- (e) If one parent cannot be available to care for the children, the other parent shall be given the "first right of refusal" to care for the children. If the other parent cannot accommodate the request, the resident parent shall be responsible for arranging alternative childcare.
- (f) It is understood that traffic and inclement weather may cause delays. Notwithstanding, every effort (including allowing for more time when necessary) shall be made by the parents to be punctual in their delivery of the children to the other parent or to activities. If one parent cannot deliver the children within 15 minutes of the scheduled time, he or she shall notify the other parent when the need for delay arises.



SECTION G: Implementation and Impasse

11. No parenting plan is permanent and all plans require revision over time as the parents' and children's' needs change. Any aspect of the parenting plan may be revised with the parents' mutual consent. The parents shall monitor the schedule and the terms of the parenting plan in relation to the child's adjustment.

SECTION H: Dispute Resolution Mechanism

12. When either parent has an issue that he or she wishes to resolve with the other parent, he or she will give the other parent notice of the need to discuss the problem by telephoning that parent.
13. The parents agree that within seven (7) days of being called by the other parent about a problematic issue, that they will meet face to face, or as soon after as is reasonable and practical, to discuss the issue and see if they can resolve the conflict between themselves.
14. If the parties alone cannot resolve the conflict, they agree that they shall refer the problematic issue to mediation with the mediator who will assist the parents in reaching a resolution. If the issue is not resolved during mediation, the parties may submit the matter to arbitration on consent.
15. While the dispute is being resolved either by mediation or arbitration, the resident parent will continue making such day to day decisions as are necessary, but will take no substantial action in the area of disagreement which would prejudice or take unfair advantage of the other parent by benefiting from their residential status.

The parents accept and agree the terms and conditions of the above Parenting Plan and will honour and respect the spirit of the Parenting Plan at all times.

SIGNED.....

SIGNED.....

This day of 2012