



## **Co-Parenting Guidelines**

### **I. What we know:**

- A. Children need to feel safe and loved.
- B. Children are products of and identify with both parents.
- C. Children are harmed by ongoing, unresolved conflict between their parents.
- D. Children have enough love for everybody.

### **II. What we can do:**

- A. Separate adult relationship issues from parenting issues; create a business-like relationship with the other parent and/or other important people in your child's life, in order to work together.
- B. Make a commitment to separate your emotional needs from the child's needs, truly looking out for the child's best interest.
- C. Continue to reassure the child of your love and your intention to be a constant presence in their life in the role of parent; make it clear to your child that you will listen to their feelings and needs, but it is your job as a parent to make the decisions.

## **Co-Parenting Meetings**

1. Make appointments to talk to each other; establish agreed upon times for beginning and ending.
2. Be prepared to communicate with the other parent.
3. Use the negotiation model:
  - a. define the issue
  - b. brainstorm possibilities
  - c. eliminate unworkable solutions
  - d. reach agreement and understanding
4. Decide on the easy issues first where there is already considerable agreement.
5. Take turns discussing your thoughts and stay on one topic at a time; look at and stay open to all options.
6. Keep past issues out of parental business talks; agree to alert one another when these issues begin to come up or when anger is interfering.
7. Attack the problem, not each other.

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