

Co-parenting

Co-parenting is about putting your own interests aside and doing what is best for your child. Almost every divorce or separation has to do with selfishness of at least one party at some time or another. Co-parenting is about putting aside the question, “How are my needs going to be met?” and asking instead, “How are my children’s needs going to be met?” The co-parenting relationship is much like the relationship between business associates. The business is how best to raise your children. If they put anger, disappointment and hurt aside, most parents admit their ultimate goals for their children are the same. They both want their children to be healthy and happy. Co-parenting is about recognizing those joint goals and working together in a business-like manner to help your child reach them. If you still have doubts about co-parenting, stop and think: your child did not ask to be placed in this untenable situation. You, the adults, have placed him/her there and you are the only ones who can make the situation bearable.

Communication Is the Key

You may not have been able to communicate with your spouse or partner during the marriage or living together, but you must find a way to do so now. Since you want your children to be successful in life, you and your ex-partner will have to learn better communication skills.

TEN TIPS FOR CO-PARENTING

1. Make your child’s happiness and well-being your number one joint goal.
2. Treat the other parent in “a business-like manner”.
3. Treat your child as a child, not as an adult confidant, messenger or spy.
4. Encourage your child’s relationship with the other parent.
5. Communicate directly with the other parent.
6. Make visitation exchanges pleasant and happy.
7. Take a parenting class.
8. Pay your child support on time.
9. Be patient and flexible.
10. Get counseling if you need it.

My Co-Parenting Commitment

I state and commit to myself and my child that I will do everything within my power to enable my child to have the happiest and best childhood possible. In order to accomplish this goal, I promise to do the following:

1. I will treat my child as a child and not use him as a spy.
2. I will speak positively about the other parent to avoid hurting my child.
3. I will encourage my child to love both his parents.
4. I will talk about adult problems with other adults and not my child
5. I will pay my child support on time
6. I will not use my child as a pawn.
7. I will encourage and support my child's visits with the other parent.
8. I will communicate directly with the other parent and not use my child as a messenger.
9. I will treat the other parent with respect and courtesy so my child will do the same.
10. I will remember that raising a child requires patience, tolerance and flexibility.

I pledge to myself and my child that I will do my best everyday to remember these promises and help my child have a healthy and happy childhood.

Signature

Date