



## CHILD CUSTODY GUIDELINES

Parents can create a safer, more secure and harmonious environment for their children by following these suggested guidelines:

1. Refrain from saying anything of a derogatory nature about the other parent in the presence of the child(ren).
2. Refrain from bringing up past grievances regarding the other parent to the child(ren).
3. Refrain from discussing financial and legal issues and disputes with child(ren).
4. Refrain from saying anything which might discourage the child(ren) from spending time with the other parent, and from pressuring the child(ren) to take sides against the other parent.
5. Spend as much time as possible with the child(ren) during the time you are responsible for them.
6. Carefully avoid scheduling or arranging activities for the child(ren) which are likely to conflict with any time period allocated to the other parent.
7. In the event that you are unable to keep the scheduled arrangements with the child(ren) on a given occasion, notify the other parent at the earliest possible opportunity.
8. Arrange ahead of time for both parents to be authorized in writing in case of emergency to take any and all actions necessary to protect the health and welfare of the child(ren).
9. Keep the other parent advised at all times of your current residence address, telephone numbers (home and work), your child(ren)'s school or child care facility, and the location where your child(ren) will be spending any extended period of time (four days or more). This information is not to be used for the purpose of harassing or annoying each other in any way, but in case of emergency.
10. Since it is both frightening and damaging for children to be exposed to violence and parental conflict, avoid arguments, fights, and threats in the presence of the child(ren).
11. Since child(ren) need to be able to depend on and to trust both parents, keep the agreements and promises you have made to the other parent and to your child(ren). This means being reliable about keeping appointments and schedules, being prompt, and not making promises to children that you cannot keep.
12. Cooperate fully, not only in carrying out the written terms of your court order or agreement, but in living up to the underlying spirit of the order as well.
13. For your child(ren)'s sake, make a special effort to set aside your personal feelings toward the other parent and maintain an attitude of tolerance, flexibility and good faith.

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