



FAMILY RENEWAL RESOURCES PROJECT

parenting forever, through whatever

Basis for Parenting Plan (father) and (mother)

- a) The proposal sets out general guidelines for co-parenting their two boys,
- b) Both parents are effective parents. There are no parenting concerns in the family's history.
- c) The parenting plan offered provides predictability and stability for their sons.
- d) The parents, agree to sign off on a code of conduct that sets out the parenting environment parenting for the benefit of their children and extended families.

Parenting Time for the mother and father.

This is intended to be the final parenting plan. It follows the intentions of the parents to have a shared parenting plan.

Parenting Care Periods 7/7

d- dad m-mother

Week One

S M T W T F S
d d d d m m m

Week Two

S M T W T F S
m m m m d d d

Notes/Comments on Schedule

The parent with the children overnight during school days is responsible for taking the children to school and for picking them up afterschool. e.g. the father in Week One takes the children to school from Mon. to Thurs. morning. The father is responsible to pick up the boys in Week One from Mon. to Wed.

In Week Two the mother is responsible for the above times for taking the boys to school and picking them up after school.

Weekend times for Week One for the mother and week two for the father begin Thurs. after school until Sun. at 6:00 PM.

The parents will together determine any before school care or after school care to be used.

Holiday weekends

Each parent shall have the boys on the holiday that falls on their scheduled parenting time.

March Break

March Break will be an exception to the normal schedule. It will be alternated between the parents. In odd numbered years (2017 & 2019) the mother will have the boys in March Break. March Break will begin on Friday after school until Sunday the week following.

Christmas and New Years

The parents will alternate Christmas Eve beginning at 6:00 PM until Christmas Day at 2:00 PM. The children will be at the other parent's home from 2:00 PM Christmas Day until 7:00 PM Boxing Day.

The same approach will be employed for New Year's Eve and New Year's Day.

The remainder of the Christmas holiday will be shared according to the schedule.

The parents will use an alternating odd/even years to determine which option is employed e.g. even years 2016 and 2018 the mother has Christmas Eve and morning gift opening; 2017 and 2019 the father has Christmas Eve and Christmas morning for gift opening with their sons.

N.B. The parents may work out a schedule that better meets the family's needs.

Mother's Day and Father's Day

Each parent will have their sons on the appropriate Sunday beginning on the Sat. evening at 7:00 PM until Sun. at 7:00 PM on a weekend when the boys are scheduled at the other home.

Birthdays

The parents agree to accommodate the other parent's birthday. This would be by ensuring if necessary a 4 hour window of time with the birthday parent.

The parent agree that each son's birthday party for friends will be alternated each year and be the responsibility of that parent. i.e. 2017 the mother's responsibility; 2018 the father's responsibility.

Each parent can plan their own family party for each son on their scheduled parenting time.

Halloween

Halloween shall be alternated each year. I.e. the father in 2016; the mother in 2017. The parent with the Halloween parenting responsibility agrees to accommodate the other parent whenever possible for a minor part of the evening.

Summer Holidays (Total of 4 weeks)

Two weeks for each parent, one week at a time. The choice of Week One will be **alternated** beginning in 2016 with the father i.e. choice of Week One and Week four. In 2016 the mother will choose weeks 2 and three in the scheduled 4 weeks of summer holidays.

In 2016 the choices should be made no later than May. 15 of each year. The parents agree to accommodate whenever possible any fixed holidays because of their workplace or special events.

Additional Parenting Terms

The parents agree to try and accommodate any special family events that occur during the other parent's parenting time with their sons. Both sets of grandparents and extended family are part of their life. Each parent recognizes that they can't demand that the other parent surrender their parenting time because it is being demanded of them. In addition a compensating parenting time (a trade-off) should be offered if possible.

The parents agree that they must be flexible for these events for over the years each side of the family may have these special family events that enrich their sons' lives.

Annual August review

The parents agree to every year have a review of the parenting schedule beginning in early August for the next school year. This review is not about changing the principle of shared parenting. It is about tweaking the plan to work better and to accommodate the boys' activities and foreseeable changes in the parent's lives in each year.

This review also allows for financial planning re: upcoming expenses for the boys in the next year and other parenting concerns, family events or significant trips. It could include a change from a maximum one week at a time summer holiday to two continuous weeks.

An August sit down is a convenient time to review the next year. A ground rule is that both parties must agree to the change or it doesn't happen. The parties can employ a form of mediation if desired.

Each parent agrees to be reasonable in making requests. The parents also recognize that inflexibility is equally dangerous to harmonious parenting of their sons.

Specific Parenting Terms that Encourage Effective Co-parenting

The parents agree to the following:

Day-to Day Care

- a) *Either parent may make day-to-day decisions pertaining to their sons when they are in their care. The care parent agrees to notify the other parent if any decision impacts the other parent or is significant to their sons.*
- b) *The above term (a) permits the other parent to do follow-up calls to make direct contact with any relevant individual to clarify any information. These individuals may include the school, coaches, dentist, doctor, etc.*
- c) *The parents agree that if either parent during their care period has to make a unilateral, major decision they will notify the other parent immediately. This contact could include notifying members of the extended family i.e. grandparents.*

Medical Care for Either Child

- a) During any hospital stay for either son the parenting schedule is set aside and either parent is welcome to attend to that son's care together or separately.*
- b) Both parents may attend separately or together any medical, dental or similar care appointments. The attending parent (if only one attending) agrees to provide same day feedback to the non-attending parent.*
- c) Each parent shall have each son's OHIP card or a copy of the card. If either son has any other records necessary for his day-to-day care each parent should have a copy. This should include the original/copy of each son's birth certificate.*

Education

- a) Both parents may attend all school activities together or separately. These include but are not limited to parent-teacher or guidance counsellor meetings, school concerts, extracurricular activities, etc.*
- b) Each parent will obtain a copy of each child's report card. Also each parent shall arrange to receive all school communication re: upcoming activities, etc.*
- c) Both parents may attend school trips. The parents should do this on an alternating basis if necessary or through communication with each other. These trips may impact pick up and return times for the boys.*
- d) The parents agree to communicate on an as needed basis re: each child's education needs.*
- e) A parenting schedule re: emergency call to a parent will be provided to the school. The parents may determine for simplicity that one parent should be the contact based on availability. They would then contact the other parent if necessary to attend to the emergency.*

Extra-curricular Activities (outside school)

- a) The parents will determine the appropriate activities and the level of activity together. This shall be determined during the yearly review in August that looks at the past year and the next school year. Outside activities are more easily planned at this time.*
- b) Either parent can schedule an activity with either son on their own parenting time. The other parent is not obligated to support the activity during **their parenting time**.*
- c) The parent with care agrees to be responsible for all travel requirements to and from these activities.*
- d) The parents shall be flexible on these arrangements since it is expected that both parents plan to attend their sons' activities*
- e) Each parent will respect the care parent's time with their sons and be respectful by not being overly intrusive. As times passes, the parents may develop a comfort level for these activities when attending together.*
- f) The parents encourage the extended families to attend these activities, including school activities i.e. concerts, school teams. Each parent is expected to 'educate' their extended family on the above ground rules.*

Additional Care for the boys- before school and after school.

- a) The parents will work out in August an appropriate schedule based on the parents work schedule.*
- b) All costs will be shared equally; no consideration re: the costs is based on one parent being more available than the other parent.*
- c) Scheduling care on PA days will be planned in August if possible, by looking at the school calendar.*

The August review allows the parents to set up a highly visible calendar that sets out their sons' activities and parenting times in two homes. The parents recognize that this is a challenge for their sons. In addition the parents will refrain from criticisms of either child or the other parent when belongings end up in the wrong home.

Travel

- a) Any parent travelling with either or both children outside the community on a holiday should inform the other parent if it impacts any scheduled or informal communication with their son.*
- b) If the travel is outside Ontario normal consent of the other parent is required.*
- c) If travelling outside Canada with either child, the non-travelling parent shall provide a **letter of consent**.*

N.B. Consent shall not be unreasonably withheld provided all issues re: parenting schedule for either son has been worked out. Any travel plans outside Ontario without the required consent of the other parent is a serious breach of this agreement and may lead to police notification.

d) The parents will share the cost of a passport for their sons and any future renewals. The parent with possession of the passport shall provide the other parent with said documents in a timely manner i.e no less than two weeks prior to out of country travel date.

e) A schedule for the non-travelling parent to communicate with their children should be included in any travel arrangements. They should not be burdensome for the travelling parent i.e. flexibility is expected re: number of contacts and time of contact.

Other parenting Matters

The parents agree:

- a) To discuss issues of discipline in the two homes. Each parent clearly may parent according to their own style; however it is recognized that consistency in parenting strategy may make it less complicated for their children.*
- b) The parents will consider family counselling if parenting style is a problem. The desire to obtain such professional support may be initiated by either parent and will be respected by the other parent.*
- c) The parents agree to attend any appropriate courses together or separately on co-parenting; they also agree to individual counselling if conflict between the parties becomes a problem that has negative consequences for proper communication re: their sons.*

- d) *The above plan has an implied code of civilized behavior to ensure positive co-parenting. The parents agree to ensure that any new, significant person in their life will adhere to such behavior. The parents also take on the responsibility that their extended family follows the behavior set out in this agreement.*

Reconciling Differences on Major Decision:

*The annual August review is generally for tinkering/minor adjustments to the parenting schedule based upon changes in work schedules, activities for either son, family events, etc. The intention is to smooth out possible irritants that can lead to conflict. The August review is **NOT about changes in the parenting principles that govern this agreement**. It is noted however that so called minor irritants can be very significant to one parent.*

Process to Be Followed To Resolve Unresolved Disagreements

- a) *Personal conversation between the parents in an appropriate, private space.*
- b) *Following step a) if the issue has not been resolved, the parties should take a two week maximum time period to consider the other parent's position and any possible win/win options for resolution. This step could include a formal exchange of written positions to fully explain each parent's position.*
- c) *The next step if not resolved is to select a third party (neutral) that each parent is comfortable in employing in this process. Each parent agrees to do their own due diligence on the selection of a third party.*
- d) *If not resolved, the parties can hire a parenting co-ordinator or start a legal proceeding. In this step the parties are caught in a process that may be binding and expensive. In doing so the parties note that they are handing decision-making over to a third party i.e. no longer a parents' decision..*
- e) *The current way of dealing with the issue remains the way the matter is done until resolved. The exception is if the parents have agreed to an interim change while the third party process is followed.*