

## GUIDELINES TO HELP IN A SUCCESSFUL PARTNERSHIP FOR POST-DIVORCE PARENTING

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- Your mutual concern is the rearing of your children. When faced with making any decision that affects your children, ask yourself, “What is in the best interests of my children?”
- Communicate in a respectful, clear, and nonjudgmental way. Stating the objectives of the conversation helps in keeping focused on the purpose of the contact. If the conversation becomes unproductive or you have concerns that the other parent may be under the influence of alcohol or drugs, say so and agree to resume the conversation at a later time.
- In the children’s presence, avoid discussion of topics that are problematic.
- Be mindful to communicate directly with one another. Children experience stress when asked to share information between parents.
- Keeping agreements and being flexible helps to reduce stressful interactions and creates an opportunity for the same courtesies to be returned to you.
- Be very clear with each other about your plans for time with the children. Include specific dates and times. Do not change any plans without first calling or discussing the proposed change with the other parent.
- Be sure each parent has the same information. Follow up the discussion of any major modifications or important arrangements in writing and send a copy to the other parent.
- To help resolve differences of opinion about what is best for your children, talk to teachers, doctors, and other involved professionals together if possible.
- Above all, cultivate good will in the partnership. Always keep in mind the importance of your investment and the expected returns. The investment is what you are willing to do for your children’s happiness and success in life. The returns are comfort and security for your children, and the knowledge that their parents care enough to work together.

