



**ADELAIDE FAMILY  
MEDIATION**

*Helping you move forward*

# Parenting Plan - things to consider

A parenting plan outlines how you agree to raise your children after separation. It describes how parents not living together will care for and make important decisions about their children in both homes.

It is helpful to have your parenting plan in writing so that there's a record of the decisions you have made together about the future. Having it written down can help you avoid conflict that could arise later on. Remember to focus on what is in the best interests of your children.

## Communication

- Information to be communicated: What information will you need to communicate with each other? Will you need to speak about medical information, school information, child care, new partners, contact information, travel plans?
- Methods of communication: Will you use face-to-face communication? Will you use other communication methods such as phone, texting, or email?
- Frequency of communication: Will there be a set time during which you and the other parent will communicate about your children? How often will you and the other parent speak about your children?
- Emergency communication: How will you contact one another in emergencies that concern your children? How will your children contact you in case of an emergency?
- Communication with the child while they are with the other parent: Will communication be through the phone, email, text, social media, video chat.
- How often will each parent communicate with the children when they are with the other parent? Is a schedule needed?

## Travel

- Notice of travelling with the children: Will you and the other parent notify each other about plans to travel with your children? If so, how far in advance? What type of travel information will you share?
- Travel outside of the state: Will there be restrictions on your children travelling out of the state? Will you require the other parent's written consent?
- Children's passports: Who may apply for your children's passports? Who will keep your children's passports?

## Parenting Time

- Parenting time: Where will your children live? Will your children live only with one parent, mainly with one parent, or equally in both parents' homes? Will your children spend time with a parent when they are not living with that parent? Will they spend certain evenings or weekend days with one parent and then go back to the other parent's house?
- Transportation: Who will transport the children between homes? Who will pay for transportation expenses? How will pick-ups and drop-offs be coordinated?
- Changes to the parenting time arrangement: Can the parenting schedule be changed for unforeseen events, such as illness? How much notice will be required if a change is needed for social events, special occasions or travel?
- Childcare and babysitting: What childcare arrangements will be required for your children (for example, full or part-time daycare, after-school care, school breaks). and how will costs be shared? Who will care for the children if your childcare provider is unavailable? If you require overnight or other childcare. will you offer the other parent the opportunity to care for the children?
- Children's belongings: Will belongings move between homes with your children? Will your children have two sets of some items? Who will purchase items for your children?
- Children's social life: How will the children spend time with friends? Who will take them to social events such as birthday parties, sleepovers, and extra-curricular activities and arrange for/pay for associated purchases (for example, birthday presents for others)?

## Holidays and Special Days

- Holidays: Who will care for the children during school breaks and public holidays? Will your children spend certain holidays with one parent every year? Will holidays alternate between households? Are changes to the scheduled arrangements acceptable? If so, how much advance notice do you need from the other parent?
- Other significant days: How will the children spend special days such as birthdays. Mother's Day or Father's Day, special events such as weddings, graduations, funerals, and any days that are especially important to your family?



## Education

- Choice of or change in school or school program: How will you make these decisions?
- Decisions about special educational needs: How will you decide whether your child should be assessed for education-related needs? Who will pay for the costs of tutoring or assessments?
- School records: How will you access or share this information? Who will receive copies of your children's report cards?
- Parent-teacher conferences: Who will attend? Will you attend jointly, or will you organise your own time with your teachers?
- School events and volunteering: How will notification of classroom or school events be shared? Who can volunteer at the children's school and attend school events? Who will sign permission forms and pay for special school activities?
- School absences: Who can take the children out of school and under what circumstances?
- Travel to and from school: How will your children get to and from school? Who will be authorised to drop off and pick up your children from school?
- Homework: Are there special arrangements that need to be made for homework to be completed when parenting time falls during the school week?
- Communication with school: Who will be the emergency contact for the school? Who will be on the school's distribution lists?

## Relocation

- Moves by a parent: How will you deal with proposed moves by you or the other parent with or without the children?
- How much notice about a move will be required? How will you deal with parenting arrangements that may be affected by a move?
- How will you each support your children's relationships with the other parent after the move?