

Joint Parenting

a checklist for separating couples who have children

This leaflet is designed to serve as a discussion point for couples who are separating or divorcing. It looks at the long term needs and considerations for a child or children whose care they will be sharing.

Children need:

- ⌘ consistency, predictability and stability
- ⌘ their views to be considered before final decisions are made.
- ⌘ clear and honest explanations and appropriate information for their age.

Living arrangements:

- 🏠 When will change-overs occur? How will change-overs occur?
- 🏠 How will parents communicate? Phone, letter, email?
- 🏠 Arrangements for the child to phone the other parent?
- 🏠 Discipline of child?
- 🏠 Mutually agreed rules?
- 🏠 Who else cares for child? Relatives? Childminders? Neighbours?

Holidays

- 🗓️ What plans?
- 🗓️ School holidays?
- 🗓️ How will care be shared?
- 🗓️ Extended family?
- 🗓️ How will child see wider family?

The best possible relationship with both parents is important

Special days

- ♥ birthdays
- ♥ Christmas
- ♥ New Year
- ♥ anniversaries
- ♥ special family or community days.

Friends

- 👥 How will the child maintain contact with their friends while at the other parent's place?

School and out-of-school activities

- 🍽️ School functions?
- 🍽️ Will you attend these together or separately?
- 🍽️ Who will attend parents' evenings, sports events, other school events?
- 🍽️ Changes in schooling?

Health

- 👤 What provisions need to be made?
- 👤 Advising other parent if the child requires urgent medical attention?
- 👤 Who takes responsibility for routine health care – medical, dentist, vaccinations?



Money checklist

- Are there regular payments being made by either of you?
- Who will pay for clothes and shoes?
- Who will pay for school or club uniforms, sports kit or equipment?
- Who will pay for travel – visits to parent, grandparents, other people?
- Who will pay for large items such as bicycle, computer, musical instrument, driving lessons?
- Will you give your child pocket money?

Changes

- 👤 moving house, city, country
- 👤 new job, new school
- 👤 new partners
- 👤 new babies

Religious or cultural upbringing

- 👤 Understandings, arrangements
- 👤 second language

Other arrangements

- 🏆 pets
- 🏆 special hobbies
- 🏆 sports
- 🏆 interests

Reviewing arrangements

- ? When?
- ? How?

Questions developed by Home and Family Society with material drawn from "Planning for your children's future" by Martin Richards and Erica De'Ath.

Home and Family Society is a not-for-profit professional counselling service caring for children, young people and adults living in Auckland. Counselling is provided on a donation-only basis to individuals, couples and families. For further information please contact:

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Society

counselling and supporting people

Joint Parenting

a simple check-list for
separating couples who have
children

This leaflet provides
a basic guide on
matters regarding the welfare and well-being of the children that
should be considered when couples
are negotiating a separation or
divorce