



The National Partnership for Community Leadership
"Strengthening Communities and Organizations to Serve People for the Future"

CO-PARENTING GLOSSARY OF TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

Accessibility - means the ease or frequency with which a parent (typically fathers) are available to their children, including whether or not they live with their children, how far away nonresident fathers live from their children, and how frequently they see or speak with their children.

Access and visitation - coordination of visitations or parenting time among divorced/separated/unmarried parents.

Co-Parenting- Co-Parenting describes a parenting situation where the parents are not in a marriage, cohabitation, or romantic relationship with one another".

Co-parenting is an interpersonal social process by which two or more people collaborate to support child rearing (Jones, Zalot, Foster, Sterrett, & Chester, 2007; McHale & Lindahl, 2011). It is important to explore the co-parent relationship as a specific social experience that affects the health and well-being of adolescent parents and their children.

Co-Parenting Agreement - is an agreement between two consenting adults regarding the collective raising of one of the parent's biological or adopted child. This sort of parenting contract outlines the goals and rules regarding how the two will contribute to childcare.

Co-Parenting v. Joint Custody - Two terms that seem interchangeable but are not joint custody and co-parenting. The difference is one is a legal term, while the other is a parenting style chosen amongst divorced/separated parents. One can have joint custody, but not co-parent.

Conflicted Co-Parenting Model - Conflicted co-parenting is when former spouses/separated parents make nasty comments about each other.

Cooperative Co-Parenting Model- Cooperative co-parenting arrangements are where parents put the well-being of their children first. This can be difficult to attain. These are parents talk over the children's problems, coordinate household rules and child- rearing practices, and adapted their schedules to fit their children's needs.

Couples Relationship Education (CRE) - CRE is a couple intervention to prevent relationship dysfunction and to address common (but often serious) problems.

Deadbeat Dads - dads earn enough to provide child support but don't.

Dead-broke Dads - dads who have limited abilities to pay child support. Most are young, poorly educated and earn less than it takes for one person to live above the poverty-level.



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Emotional Intelligence - is the ability to understand and manage your emotions, and those of people around you.

Father Engagement - refers to what fathers actually do when they are with the children. This may be playing games, teaching, watching television, coaching, sports, doing homework, and so forth.

Father Involvement – refers to positive, wide-ranging, and active participation in their children's lives.

Fragile Family - A fragile family is one in which the parents are unwed at the time of their child's birth. These parents may be cohabiting or living apart. Additionally, legal paternity may not be established.

Healthy co-parenting relationship clearly states that the children must not be the mediators between the parents or must not facilitate the dialogues between them. Children should not be made aware or hear about the discord between you and your partner (ex-husband/wife or boyfriend/girlfriend).

High-Functioning/Secure Co-Parenting Relationship - A high-functioning co-parenting relationship often results in children who are emotionally resilient, adaptive, and willing to take appropriate risks.

Joint Custody - legal custody of a child or children that is shared by both parents after divorce or separation. Example - "the two have joint custody of their sons"

Joint Physical Custody - Joint physical custody means both parents share physical possession of the child and both have an equal stake in making decisions about the child's welfare, education, health care and religion.

Low Functioning/Sabotaging Co-Parenting Relationships - A low-functioning co-parenting relationship could result in children who are fragile, emotionally anxious, avoidant, or have a chaotic attachment style. These children may experience emotional wounds, be prone to addiction, have weakened immune systems, and experience difficulties connecting to future romantic partners.

Parallel Co-Parenting Model - It is the most common form of co- parenting. These parents simply ignore each other. They do not interfere with each other's parenting or make any coordinated parenting strategies. They usually send communication through their children. The lack of parenting communication opens the door to problems and as children get older monitoring can be difficult. Children learn to manipulate or play one parent against the other. Children are used as messengers.

Parenting Plan - A parenting plan is a document developed and agreed to by the parents of a minor child, and approved by the court, or if the parents cannot agree, established by the court, which governs the relationship between the parents regarding the child (encompassing "custody", "parental responsibility", and "visitation"). A parenting plan may address issues such as the child's education, health care, and physical, social, and emotional well-being, and must include a time-sharing schedule. The parenting plan must take into account the Uniform Child Custody Jurisdiction and Enforcement Act,



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the International Child Abduction Remedies Act, the Parental Kidnapping Prevention Act, and the Hague Convention on the Civil Aspects of International Child Abduction when addressing jurisdictional issues.

Parenting Time Agreement - A parenting agreement (or parenting plan) is a written document that you and your ex-spouse create together to outline how you will handle the care of your children after your divorce. Creating an agreement helps both parents understand what the other expects of them and can alleviate conflict that often comes with separation.

Paternity-Establishment - If parents are not married when they split up, it is important for the father to establish paternity, meaning ask the court to find that he is the legal father of that child unless paternity is established, the father has no rights to request time-sharing or parental responsibility from the court.

Shared Parenting - Shared parenting, shared residence, joint residence, shared custody, joint physical custody, equal parenting time (EPT) is a child custody arrangement after divorce or separation, in which both parents share the responsibility of raising their child(ren), with equal or close to equal parenting time. A regime of shared parenting is based on the idea that children have the right to and benefit from a close relationship with both their parents, and that no child should be separated from a parent.

The term *Shared Parenting* is applied in cases of divorce, separation or when parents do not live together. *Shared parenting* is different from split custody, where some children live primarily with their mother while one or more of their siblings live primarily with their father.

Sole Physical Custody - involves one parent having physical custody of the child or children. The other parent, or "non-custodial" parent, only exercises physical custody over the child when visitation rights are involved.

Social Welfare - A social welfare system offers assistance to individuals and families in need, with such programs as health care assistance, food stamps, and unemployment compensation. Lesser-known parts of a social welfare system include disaster relief and educational assistance.