

National Parents Organization Your Talking Points to Introduce Shared Parenting

***True shared parenting requires equal or, when that's not feasible,
nearly equal parental responsibilities.***

The Problem for Our Children

- A vast and rapidly growing number of children are being raised in households where the mother and father no longer live together.
- The family court system is naturally adversarial, creating a disincentive for parents to mediate. It discourages parents from being parents, and ultimately harms children.
- The Center for Disease Control, the Department of Justice, and the Bureau of the Census report: 30% of children who live apart from their fathers will account for –
 - 63% of teen suicides;
 - 70% of juveniles in state operated institutions;
 - 71% of high-school dropouts;
 - 75% of children in chemical-abuse centers;
 - 85% of rapists;
 - 85% of youths in prison;
 - 85% of children who exhibit behavioral disorders; and
 - 90% of homeless and runaway children.

The Solution for Our Children

Shared parenting, where both parents have equal standing raising children after a separation or divorce, is a solution that prominent and respected experts in child development have shown through research that -

- children ardently desire;
- makes them happier;
- improves their schooling;
- decreases delinquency, gang violence and trouble with the law;
- decreases substance abuse and teen pregnancy;
- increases child support compliance; and
- diminishes parental conflict and domestic violence.

Shared parenting After Separation or Divorce is Best for Children

- Children have a right to develop an equally close relationship with both parents
- Linda Nielsen, professor of Women's Studies at Wake Forest University in Illinois reports seventeen studies showing that children of divorce want shared parenting.
- Decades of social science research clearly establishes that, except in rare cases, children are more likely to experience healthier socio-emotional-psychological development if both parents, following a separation or divorce, share in the day-to-day responsibilities of rearing the children.
- Before divorce or separation, a child interacts with both parents on a daily basis. It is critically important that the bond each child shares with his mother and father stays intact and is improved as much as possible to insulate the child from the negative effects of divorce.
- Without shared parenting, parents will fight in court over child custody as long as there is a strong chance to win sole or primary custody over the kids they love. This conflict puts stress on children, ties up the legal system, and bankrupts families with legal bills.
- Shared parenting removes the need for endless litigation.
- Financial resources can be spent on the children, rather than lawyers.

Our Mission

The National Parents Organization improves the lives of children and strengthens society by protecting every child's right to the love and care of both parents after separation or divorce. We seek better lives for children through family court reform that establishes equal rights and responsibilities for fathers and mothers.