



ANGIULI & GENTILE, LLP
ATTORNEYS AT LAW

POST-DIVORCE/SEPARATION **PARENTING PLAN**



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CRAFTING POST-DIVORCE/POST-SEPARATION PARENTING PLANS

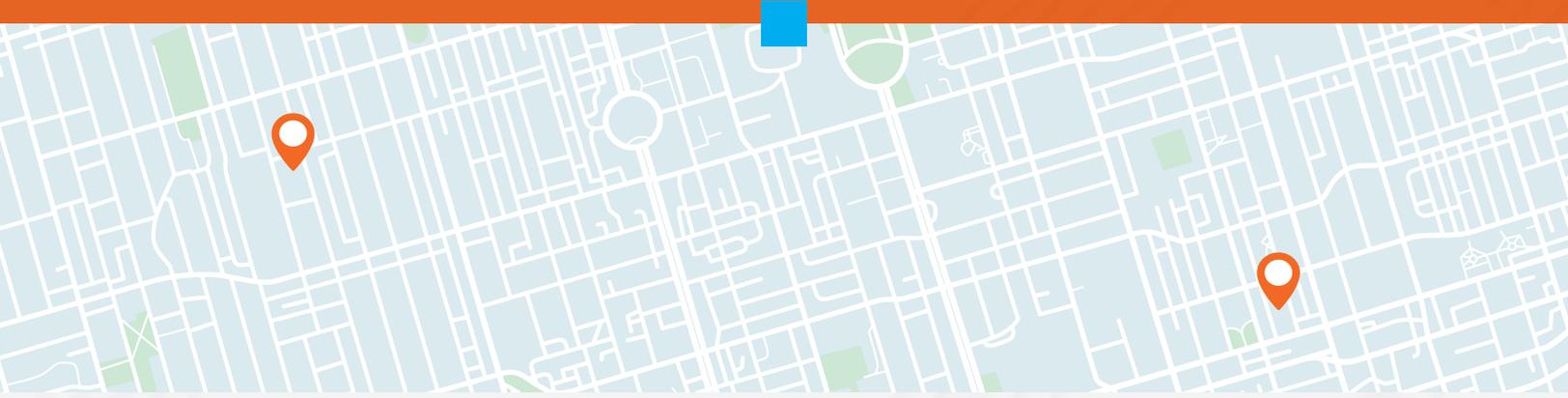
When crafting a post-divorce or post-separation parenting plan it is prudent to visualize future scenarios as opposed to only considering one's present-day circumstances. So, what does this mean in practical terms? This means that both parents should do their very best to tailor their post-divorce/separation parenting agreement so that its structure remains fluid enough to navigate a future of ever-changing family dynamics.

There is no question that establishing strong, effective communication between both parents, early in the post-divorce/separation process, is of paramount importance. The best parenting plans typically include, whenever possible, shared decision making as well as ensuring that both parents have adequate time with their children. At Angiuli & Gentile, LLP, we will always do our best to try to create a plan for a shared future that is fair to both you and your children and create a plan that anticipates life's inevitable twists and turns while remaining as clear and direct as possible.

There are many factors to consider when thinking about post-divorce/separation parenting, but of course they cannot all be dealt with in a short e-book. With that caveat in mind, of the utmost importance is the topic of how-to best plan to provide for a loving and stable environment for your children going forward. The age of your children is also a consideration, as is the value system that governs how both you and your former spouse intend to parent going forward. Your agreement should remain as flexible as possible and should provide for the inevitable need for change as your children grow older. What works for a three-year old will not work for a 13-year-old and vice versa.

When seeking common ground on post-divorce/post-separation parenting agreements, here at Angiuli & Gentile, LLP, we do our best to encourage both parents to keep their egos in check, as well as their anger, when they create their plan. The emotional needs and happiness of your children should remain your top priority. Your children's lives will depend on today's decisions, and you should always remember that your children's emotional security is your number one priority.

TRANSITION AND RELOCATION



After a divorce or separation, it is common that parents who were formerly living in the same household will subsequently live in two separate homes going forward. Where will these new homes be located? Will one parent remain in the family home for period of time? If the marital home does need to be sold, what will everybody's living situation look like going forward? There is no one size that fits all answer to these questions, but there are common scenarios to reflect upon.

For example, one parent may need to, or simply may choose to, move far away from the other co-parent. This complicates co-parenting tremendously and makes convenient access to the children for visitation purposes much more difficult. Consider, for example, if one parent chooses to live in Staten Island and the other parent chooses to live on Long Island. In this type of situation, it might take well over two hours of travel, just to get from one place to the other. This will create an extremely cumbersome situation when it comes to visitation and co-parenting. If this type of geography is your only option, a co-parenting schedule that will limit back and forth travel is usually preferable.

Similarly, any move out of state by one parent will impact the quality and quantity of parenting time for the noncustodial parent. More importantly, it may prove to be very painful emotionally for the children. Parenting plans that are mindful and respectful of time, stress, and the financial burden that travel places on everyone, tend to be the best for all concerned. Hours of travel will add up quickly and can certainly lead to increased resentment, financial hardship, and most importantly, limited time for visitation. The purpose of a divorce or separation is to start a better life for yourself **as well as for your children so you should do your best to make sure that the children do not become a casualty of geography.**

TRANSITION AND RELOCATION

Another post-divorce/separation co-parenting consideration is the efficacy of the “every other weekend” type of schedule, which not only complicates the lives of both the parents but the lives of the children as well. Often children have active school schedules and a myriad of extracurricular activities for which time needs to be budgeted for. When parents get along and effectively co-parent, children usually thrive. Even though a court may impose something like an “every other weekend and one dinner a week” type visitation schedule, this type of co-parenting is often not in your family’s best interests. Strive to do better for your children.

When crafting an access schedule for your family, it is critical to consider your children’s schedules as well. We encourage you to remember to put your children’s lives front and center and continue to the best of your ability to function as you would have had you and your former spouse not divorced or separated.



SCHOOL VACATIONS & HOLIDAYS



Co-parents will need to set up vacation schedules as well as holiday schedules. It is imperative that co-parents minimize the anxiety and disagreements caused by uncertainty in these matters. Schedules can always be changed by agreement as the children get older and as their preferences change. The schedules you create now should be merely a default position for the family moving forward until the preferences and needs of the children can be better identified. Flexibility and cooperation will be the keys going forward.

When it comes to summer, some parents may choose to divide the summer equally. Others may choose to permit each parent to select one or two weeks of vacation time with the non-custodial parent. Parties may choose to rotate holiday vacations such as winter breaks or spring breaks. Remember, there is no “correct way” to do all of this but showing unconditional love for your children and consideration for their feelings, as well as respect your former spouse’s needs, is always advisable.

COMMUNICATION

Parents who have been involved in a divorce or separation may often be angry at one another for various reasons but, if that anger bleeds into parenting discussions it will be destructive to the children. Disrespect, distrust, anger and aggression should be dealt with maturely and early in the process. Children need to be proud of their parents and they should feel that both parents present a unified front when it comes to parenting them. Pride, blame, ego and anger will not benefit your children. On the other hand, love, respect and happiness will. Being right at the expense of your children will not serve your children's best interests. Often it is helpful to check in with a trusted friend or a therapist before you make an issue out of something.

You will find over time that often you may have different parenting styles with your co-parent, both of which have different strengths and weaknesses. Just because your co-parent doesn't do things the same way you do, doesn't mean that visits should be denied, micromanaged or criticized. Your children will benefit much more from a cooperative relationship between co-parents.

Your children are like sponges. They will pick up their character and learn how they should live, love, and conduct their lives going forward from both you and your co-parent. Lead by example as your actions today will be shaping your children's lives for tomorrow.





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We hope that this e-book has been helpful. If you are ready to begin the divorce process or if you have more questions, please contact us today at **718-816-0005** or at **www.aglawnyc.com**.

You will be glad that you did.
You deserve peace of mind.

Contact us today to
schedule an appointment.
We're in this together.

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