

WHAT YOU NEED
TO KNOW ABOUT...

Parenting Plans

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What is a parenting plan?

It's a written agreement between parents that sets out how they will raise their children together after divorce or separation.

It is a shared commitment by both parents that they are willing to put the needs of their children before their personal views of each other. It can help when things become difficult.

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What should you include in
your parenting plan?

Start with these 8 topics and
write down your answers.

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General Principles

How will both parents conduct themselves with each other and their child; consider statements on new partners, decision-making, your parenting style i.e. discipline, social media, or any restrictions etc

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Living Arrangements

Who will have parental responsibility for your children? Will it be sole or shared?

Outline your parenting schedule. Think about days, weekends, school holidays, birthdays, special occasions e.g. Christmas, Diwali, Eid. Add details about pick up or drop off and how you will communicate virtually on your 'off' day;

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Healthcare

Who will attend medical appointments with your children? For example GP visits, dentists, opticians, specialists etc.

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Money

Who will pay for day-to-day expenses, holidays, housing or education? What about extra-curricular costs such as music or sports lessons?

Talk about how you will make and track payments - e.g. monthly reimbursements, receipts, bank transfers etc.

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Education

Some questions you may wish to ask:

- Which school do you want your children to go to? and do you prefer private or state?
- Who will attend school appointments?
- How will you deal with notices or reports sent by the school?
- Do you need a savings fund for university?

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Religion

How do you want to raise your children? Do you want them to attend religious services or education?

An important topic, particularly if you and your partner are from different religious backgrounds or have differing expectations.

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Travel

What arrangements do you want to put in place for travel?

Remember, before travelling abroad with your child, you must get the permission of everyone with parental responsibility or from a court. (You can take a child abroad for 28 days without getting permission if a child arrangement order says the child must live with you, unless a court order says you can't).

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Time With Other People

You may wish to include a section which covers contact with other family members such as grandparents, siblings, aunts etc;

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Well done!
You've just finished
your Parenting Plan!

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What If We Can't Agree?

Our guide is designed to help you think about some of the issues which can cause difficulty. It is not intended to act as a final list.

If you are unable to agree on a plan with your co-parent, you may wish to speak to a mediator or contact a legal professional.

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some final thoughts...

- Every family is different - include what's important to your family;
- Remember to listen to each other - you both want the best for your child;
- Balance detail with the flexibility to accommodate day-to-day life;
- You may want to include a date for a “first review.” This sets a time for you to meet and discuss the parenting plan and how it's working.

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