

**Personality Traits of Parents;
High Conflict and Alienation;
Developmentally-Based
Parenting Plans**

FLPA WA, LEGAL AID WA, WA PATHWAYS NETWORK
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Focus of the Day

- ▶ High Conflict Parents
 - ▶ Their Potential Personality Dynamics
 - ▶ Potential Boundary Issues with Children
 - ▶ Alienation / Refuse-Resistant Matters
- ▶ Developmentally Appropriate Parenting Plans
 - ▶ Special Focus on 0-4 year old children

High Conflict Parents

Acknowledgement

- ▶ Part of this presentation is inspired by the work of Bill Eddy, JD, LSCW.

Difficult People

- ▶ How often do you encounter them?
- ▶ Are there particular types of cases in which you more frequently encounter them?
- ▶ How do you feel about them?
 - ▶ What do they make you think?
 - ▶ What do they make you feel?



Low-Conflict Families (20-30%)

- ▶ Parents May be Self Represented or Hire 1 or 2 Attorneys
- ▶ Parents / Attorneys Create Own Parenting Plan, With or Without Need for Mediation
- ▶ Parents / Attorneys Easily Resolve Financial Issues / Property Settlement
- ▶ Parents Aren't Derogatory Toward One Another and Don't Let Financial Issues Affect Children
- ▶ Rarely Go to Court, Only for Specific Change of Circumstances
- ▶ Typical Court Services May Include:
 - ▶ Mediation Filing of Paperwork Judge to Finalize

Medium-Conflict Families (60-70%)

- ▶ Parents May be Self Represented or Hire Attorneys
- ▶ Difficulty Settling Parenting Plan
- ▶ Difficulty Settling Financial Issues
- ▶ Several Court Dates Needed to Settle the Issues
- ▶ Parents Have Difficult Time With Each Other in Public, and Provoke Mild Loyalty Conflicts in Children
- ▶ Parents Critical of Each Other in Court Documents
- ▶ Parents May Return to Court at Times of Conflict
- ▶ Parents Have Difficulty Settling Relocation Issues
- ▶ Typical Court Services May Include:
 - ▶ Several Mediation Sessions
 - ▶ Several Settlement Sessions
 - ▶ Parent Orientation / Education
 - ▶ Focused Custody Evaluation
 - ▶ Judge to Settle Issues

High-Conflict Families (10-15%)

- ▶ Parents May be Self Represented or Hire Attorneys; Many Parents Fire & Replace Attorneys; Extreme Difficulty Taking Legal Advice
- ▶ Extreme Difficulty Settling Parenting Plan / Financial Issues
- ▶ Allegations of:
 - ▶ Parental Alienation
 - ▶ Substance Abuse
 - ▶ Physical Abuse / Domestic Violence
 - ▶ Sexual Abuse
 - ▶ Neglectful Parenting
 - ▶ Mirroring Allegations

High-Conflict Families (10-15%)

- ▶ Parents May Have Restraining Orders and Can't Be Together in Public, Even at Children's School / Athletic Events
- ▶ Extremely Derogatory Attitudes / Behaviors Between Parents
- ▶ Parents Merge Own Needs / Feelings with Kids
- ▶ Frequent "Tribal Warfare" of Extended Family or Friends
- ▶ 85 - 90 % of Court Services / Time Taken Up By 10 - 15 % of Families

High-Conflict Families (10-15%)

- ▶ Typical Court Services May Include:
 - ▶ Several Mediation / Settlement Sessions
 - ▶ Parent Orientation / Education
 - ▶ Divorce Groups for Children
 - ▶ Complex Custody Evaluation / Perhaps Ongoing Updates
 - ▶ Judge to Settle Issues
 - ▶ High - Conflict Parenting Groups
 - ▶ Use of Special Master / Parent Coordinators
 - ▶ Judge to Continue Review / Monitor Family



- ▶ What are some of the tip-offs that a person is a difficult individual?
- ▶ What "signals" do you have that helps you identify these people before their difficult nature becomes fully evident?

Signals

- ▶ You become angry for no apparent reason
- ▶ You find yourself wanting to say things you don't normally say
- ▶ You find yourself wanting to do things you don't normally do
- ▶ You find yourself wanting to avoid or run way
- ▶ You find yourself distracted/disinterested

Who are Difficult People?



- ▶ Think of these individuals as those who have a pattern of behavior that increases conflict. It is a behavioral pattern and may also be a personality pattern.
- ▶ Many difficult people do not think of themselves as difficult. They view themselves as frustrated, misunderstood, and without a fundamental role in conflicts.
- ▶ The "issue" is not the issue. They are not so much seeking resolution of an issue of dispute as they are seeking to be in control, to feel efficacious, understood, validated.

Difficult People Typically Display

- ▶ All or nothing thinking
- ▶ Unmanaged emotions
- ▶ Extreme behaviors

They are NOT self-aware and externalize and project blame

Personality Drives Conflict

- ▶ Difficult matters are not "issue driven"
 - ▶ The child custody case with complex issues that can be negotiated and settled with little, if any litigation
- ▶ Difficult matters are "personality driven"
 - ▶ The relatively simple child custody case that takes several years, costs hundreds of thousands of dollars, requires multiple rounds of litigation and that comes back

Personality Types

- ▶ There is no ideal "type"
- ▶ If someone's personality demonstrates features of balance, consistency, regulated mood, and an ability for self-reflection, it is healthy.
- ▶ But that doesn't mean that every healthy person is the same or that all healthy people demonstrate all of the characteristics of positive mental health

People with Difficult Personality:

- ▶ Are OK with who they are – it is others who are troubled
 - ▶ Are not the cause of the problem or the distress
 - ▶ They are victims – others need to change
- ▶ But they actually often are the primary and sometimes the sole cause of problems because they are responding to their own internal emotional crises which they fail to recognize

- ▶ They see internal problems as external problems
- ▶ Often induce others into behaving as they expect they will behave in order to validate their own expectations
- ▶ Have vague notions of conspiracy and vague notions of agency
- ▶ Focus intense energy on blaming others

Personality Disorders

- ▶ **Cluster A** (Odd, bizarre, eccentric)
 - ▶ Paranoid PD, Schizoid PD, Schizotypal PD
- ▶ **Cluster B** (Dramatic, erratic)
 - ▶ Antisocial PD, Borderline PD, Histrionic PD, Narcissistic PD
- ▶ **Cluster C** (Anxious, fearful)
 - ▶ Avoidant PD, Dependent PD, Obsessive-compulsive PD

Cluster B

- ▶ **Borderline Personality Disorder**
 - ▶ Extreme and at times sudden mood swings, fear of abandonment, anger, manipulative, all or nothing thinking, black and white thinking, lack of ambivalence

- ▶ **Narcissistic Personality Disorder**
 - ▶ Extreme occupation with self, lack of recognition and even ability recognize the needs of others, hyper-inflated ego and sense of superiority, constant need for affirmation and assurance

▶ Antisocial

- ▶ Lack of conscience and self-reflection in any form, disregard to everyday rules of conduct and social order, personal gain is the ultimate goal, will harm others to get what they want, do not learn from their mistakes or their experience

▶ Histrionic

- ▶ Extreme dramatic emotionalism and intensity, immaturity, similar to Borderline but usually less angry and more drama

What Do These Have In Common?

- ▶ Easily drawn into intense conflicts with others
- ▶ Immature orientation that emphasizes self over others
- ▶ Inability to self-reflect
- ▶ Inability to see their role in the conflicts in their lives
- ▶ Struggle to learn from experience
- ▶ Can be superficially charming and seductive

- ▶ Easy to be "sucked in" before you know what is going on
- ▶ Their denial of responsibility and blame on others for their problems keeps lives in chaos
- ▶ If you please them today, get ready to be taken down from the pedestal because these people cannot allow themselves to feel pleased, needy or to affirm you

Feelings Come From Thoughts

Cognitive Psychology and Cognitive Therapy has been very successful in treating "emotional" disorders such as depression and anxiety.

The basis of Cognitive Therapy is that dysfunctional thoughts produce unpleasant feelings. Correct the thoughts and the feelings change.

Cognitive Distortions

- ▶ All or nothing thinking
 - ▶ She is either good or bad
- ▶ Emphasizing certain thoughts over others
 - ▶ Looking for what doesn't work instead of what works
- ▶ Forming opinions based on emotions
 - ▶ That was stupid. Therefore I'm stupid or You're stupid
- ▶ Inaccurate correlations
 - ▶ Every time I go to the footy game, my team loses. Therefore, I cause them to lose. I'm bad.

- ▶ Overgeneralization
 - ▶ I had a bad meal at that restaurant. Therefore, they serve bad food.
- ▶ Jumping to Conclusions
 - ▶ Someone believes that another person is reacting negatively towards them when in fact that other person is not feeling well.
- ▶ Catastrophizing
 - ▶ Exaggerating the importance of insignificant events or failing to properly appraise the importance of significant events
- ▶ Personalization
 - ▶ Our wearing formal clothes to what turned out to be an informal party made everyone at the party uncomfortable

- ▶ Should/Must/Never/Always/Ought
 - ▶ These are "parent" words. These are admonishments one hears from one's internal parent. They result in us feeling bad about ourselves. "I really shouldn't eat so much" or "I really should exercise more."
- ▶ Blame
 - ▶ When something goes wrong, looking to blame (self or other) rather than understand and learn.

- Child's Resistance/Refusal to See A Parent
- ▶ We need to think in terms of multiple potential contributing factors which are not mutually exclusive
 - ▶ Alienation
 - ▶ Estrangement
 - ▶ Response to parental conflict (alignment)

Alienation

- ▶ A convergence of relationship dynamics which together cause a child to express unjustified negativity towards a parent.
- ▶ The negativity is disproportionate
- ▶ NOTICE
 - ▶ This formulation does not “blame” an alienating parent or see the phenomenon in a non-systemic way

Estrangement

- ▶ A convergence of relationship dynamics which together cause a child to express reluctance/refusal to see a parent
- ▶ The reactions are objectively defensible and proportionate to the parent’s real “threat” and behavior.
- ▶ NOTICE:
 - ▶ No reference is made to blame or fault – there is a systemic understanding

Alignment

- ▶ A convergence of factors where a child expresses a clear and unusually strong preference for one parent over another.
- ▶ Alignment can result from
 - ▶ Temperamental match/mismatch
 - ▶ A child’s healthy and self-preserving reaction to excessive parental conflict
 - ▶ Social/Demographic/Environmental factors
 - ▶ Proximity of home to school/friends
 - ▶ Gender identification
 - ▶ Financial issues

- ▶ Refusal of parental contact often has more than one contributing cause...it is often a hybrid of alienation/estrangement/alignment
- ▶ Note that instilling insecurity in children about others is something all parents do, both in the interests of safety and the preservation of the family's integrity
 - ▶ Example: Be afraid of the man in the trench coat
- ▶ From a systems perspective, there is another factor to consider when understanding the phenomena....

Boundary & Role Definition

- ▶ Conceptually...we are reminded that the development of interpersonal boundaries facilitates the development of self, identity and separateness.
- ▶ This in turn leads to successful adult autonomy and interdependent functioning.
- ▶ Boundaries are stable-ish – they tend to break down under stress.

Things that can stress and compromise boundaries

- ▶ Parental absence
- ▶ Illness
- ▶ Death
- ▶ Caregiver pathology
- ▶ Co-parental conflict
- ▶ Separation
- ▶ Divorce
- ▶ The breakdown of healthy intrafamilial and generational boundaries is often associated with enmeshment and role reversal. In the resistance to contact phenomena, we are often looking at *role corruption*.

Parentification

- ▶ Is a pathological parent-child role change
- ▶ The most common boundary/role corruption in divorce
- ▶ The parentifying adult recruits the child to meet the parent's needs but not for legitimate reasons
- ▶ There are some legitimate reasons this can happen – these are distortions rather than corruptions
 - ▶ Illness
 - ▶ Profound depression
 - ▶ Substance dependence
 - ▶ Economic need

- ▶ Parents who do not experience their own parents as nurturing and nourishing are more vulnerable to parentifying children
- ▶ Role corruption in general and parentification more specifically interferes with the child's emotional development, cognitive development, social development and the ability to make and maintain a healthy relationship with the other parent

- Parentified children have higher rates of depression, suicidal feelings, guilt, worry, social isolation, psychosomatic symptoms.
- Parentification during formative years results in an adult life in which relationships are characterized by distrust and problems functioning independently.
- When the corruption occurs during divorce, the problems multiply because the child is also called upon to soothe the parents concerning adult distress rather than their own distress that is caused by the adult distress

▶ Example: A parent reports that children are fearful of or do not wish to see their other parent. Upon interview, the child speaks well of the parent and upon observation, interacts warmly. The child acknowledges that her favored parent gets sad and becomes depressed when the child is not around and feels that they need to be there to make sure nothing bad happens. They believe that the parent “needs” them.

Adultification

- ▶ This type of corruption is characterized by recruiting the child in a peer or partner like role.
- ▶ It is distinct from Parentification but not mutually exclusive
- ▶ The Adultified child becomes the parent’s friend, confidant and ally
- ▶ The Parent-Child dyad functions more mutually and reciprocally than the parentified dyad or the healthy dyad
- ▶ These children are exposed to adult roles and information prematurely and assume adult roles and responsibilities within their family networks

- ▶ The adultified child is turned to for the supports that are lost when divorce happens.
- ▶ The parent takes advantage of the child’s normative need for acceptance (and thus role conformity) as super-mature insight
- ▶ The child is then elevated into a co-conspirator, collaborator and ally
- ▶ Typically only children or first born children
- ▶ May be socially precocious but are likely quite emotionally immature
- ▶ Higher rates of anxiety, depression, anger.

- ▶ Example: A child who is fearful of a parent but can't know of the issues that are the basis of the fear.
- ▶ Claiming memories of a parent's drinking when they were too young to remember or perhaps were not born
- ▶ Knowledge of a parent's history when that knowledge serves no clear purpose
- ▶ Knowledge of a parent's away-from-home behavior that the child does not need to know or that doesn't impact the child

Infantilization

- ▶ The boundary is corrupted by the parent's need to keep the child dependent and inability to tolerate age appropriate growth towards independence.
- ▶ The parent needs to be needed.
- ▶ These parents look like and often are appropriate caregivers to young children and infants
- ▶ Deficit becomes apparent as the child becomes older

- ▶ Often home schooled
- ▶ Often discouraged from making friends and social relationships
- ▶ Feels guilty for engaging in age-appropriate activities
- ▶ As they grow older, are truant, school resistant, agoraphobic
- ▶ Example: Munchausen's By Proxy

Gatekeeping

Gatekeeping ¹

- ▶ Continuum from Facilitative Gatekeeping (FG) to Restrictive Gatekeeping (RG)
 - Proactive toward other parent → Severely Alienating
 - Inclusive of other → Marginalizes other
 - Boosts image of other → Derogates other
 - Ongoing communication → Refuses to communicate
 - Flexible time-sharing → Rigid adherence to schedule
 - Ensures Child's opportunity to develop relationship w other → blocks attempts for engagement / closeness w other
- Austin, Fieldstone, and Pruett – *Benchbook on Parental Gatekeeping*

Justified Restrictive Gatekeeping

- ▶ Limits to parental access for purpose of protecting children
 - ▶ Corroborated history of CCV
 - ▶ Harsh discipline / child abuse
 - ▶ Parent's abuse of substances / alcohol
 - ▶ Parent's major mental health disorder / not taking prescribed medication
 - ▶ Parent's continued inappropriate parenting / co-parenting behaviors that negatively affect child

Unjustified Restrictive Gatekeeping

- ▶ Limits parental access reinforces inappropriate behavior of RG parent
 - Parental belief in greater importance of his/her role, most common among mothers
 - Parent questioning competence of other parent without adequate foundation
 - Parent feels child's presence is essential to parent's coping causing reluctance to share child
 - Parents misperceiving being marginalized and value as parent not recognized, most common among fathers
 - Parent is angry and wishes to punish other parent

Table 1

GATEKEEPING CONTINUUM	
Ranges in Attitudes/Behavior from Facilitative Gatekeeping (FG) to Restrictive Gatekeeping (RG)	
Very Facilitative → Cooperative → Disengaged → Restrictive → Very Restrictive	
Proactive Toward Other Parent	→ Severely Alienating Behaviors
Inclusive of Other Parent	→ Marginalizes Other Parent
Boosts Image of Other Parent	→ Derogates Other Parent
Ongoing Efforts at Communication	→ Refuses to Communicate
Flexible Time-sharing	→ Rigid Adherence to Parenting Time Schedule
Ensures Child's Opportunity to Develop Relationship with Other Parent	→ Severe Child Alienation

© William G. Austin, Linda Fieldstone, Marsha K. Pruett, 2012.

Implications for Custody Evaluators *

- ▶ Assess past patterns of involvement by each parent.
- ▶ Assess the type of Gatekeeping that occurred during the marriage and separation.
- ▶ Distinguish between Gatekeeping attitudes and behaviors.
- ▶ Determine if the restrictive Gatekeeping attitudes seem to reflect short-term and litigation related distress, or if they are likely to become part of a pattern of enduring conflict and entrenched Gatekeeping behaviors.
- ▶ Ascertain if the parents can see value in the other parent despite their negative attitudes and feelings towards their ex-partner, and whether they can compartmentalize feelings from co-parenting behaviors.

* These and the following Implications slides adapted from Austin et al, 2013, Family Court Review

Implications for Custody Evaluators II

- ▶ Be mindful that litigating parties' reports of Gatekeeping behaviors may be distorted and exaggerated.
- ▶ Look for corroborative collateral data to confirm Gatekeeping behaviors.
- ▶ If there are restrictive Gatekeeping attitudes and/or behaviors, do the data show they are justifiable?
- ▶ Expect to see protective Gatekeeping in cases involving allegations of intimate partner violence.
- ▶ Distinguish between protective Gatekeeping and unjustified gate-closing behaviors.

Implications for Parenting Plans

- ▶ If there is a cooperative co-parenting style between parents and cooperative or facilitative Gatekeeping, then shared decision-making/joint legal custody is generally warranted
- ▶ If there has been a significant degree of restrictive Gatekeeping that is unjustified by the facts, implications for creating a best interests parenting plan include:
 - ▶ Try and determine if the restrictive Gatekeeping is enduring or primarily litigation related
 - ▶ Substantial restrictive Gatekeeping suggests a need for guaranteeing the receiving parent sufficient parenting time
 - ▶ Specific and detailed orders are a structural solution
 - ▶ Expect the restrictive parent to resist the solution
 - ▶ Parent Education useful for less severe restrictive Gatekeeping
 - ▶ Professionals should work with parents to ensure that neither is restrictive and to steer parents in conflict toward cooperative co-parenting and facilitative Gatekeeping

Implications for Judges

- ▶ A Gatekeeping analysis can help with decision making about parental access and shared decision-making
- ▶ Litigating parents need to be encouraged to strive for facilitative Gatekeeping and cooperative co-parenting and to take required co-parenting education classes seriously
- ▶ In high conflict cases, judges will want to implement orders with greater specificity
- ▶ Mothers often have concerns about the father's parenting competency with very young children that may need to be addressed through parenting skill training and/or a graduated increase in the father's parenting time as the child matures

Implications for Judges II

- ▶ Specific restrictive Gatekeeping behaviors need to be identified and addressed. Be mindful of the danger of just labeling a parent as a "restrictive gatekeeper"
- ▶ It is important to distinguish between Gatekeeping attitudes and behaviors and to encourage parents to compartmentalize the latter so that children's exposure to conflict is minimized
- ▶ A Gatekeeping analysis is a central concern in a relocation dispute. Judges will want to be convinced that the moving parent can be a facilitative gatekeeper and proactively inclusive of the other parent
- ▶ The term alienation is often used loosely and inaccurately in litigation, but extreme alienating behaviors by a parent are a form of unjustified restrictive Gatekeeping

References on Gatekeeping

- ▶ William G. Austin, Linda Fieldstone & Marsha Kline Pruett (2013) "Bench Book for Assessing Parental Gatekeeping in Parenting Disputes: Understanding the Dynamics of Gate Closing and Opening for the Best Interests of Children", *Journal of Child Custody*, 10:1, 1-16.
- ▶ William G. Austin, Marsha Kline Pruett, H.D. Kirkpatrick, James R. Flens, and Jonathan W. Gould (2013) "Parental Gatekeeping And Child Custody / Child Access Evaluation: Part I: Conceptual Framework, Research, And Application", *Family Court Review*, 51, 3, 485-501.
- ▶ William G. Austin (2011), "Parental Gatekeeping In Custody Disputes: Mutual Parental Support In Divorce". *American Journal of Family Law*, 25(4), 148-153

Child Issues in Development of Alienation

- ▶ Most children are overwhelmed by nature of parental conflict
 - ▶ Many experience significant anxiety & internal splitting
 - ▶ This splitting is normal in young children
 - ▶ A sign of regression in children older than five.
- ▶ By taking sides, children are less likely to feel in the middle and anxiety can be reduced.
- ▶ While not always the case, there is often a prior rift in the relationship between child and rejected parent
- ▶ This rift gets widened when alienating messages occur.

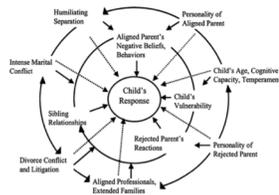
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Child Issues in Development of Alienation

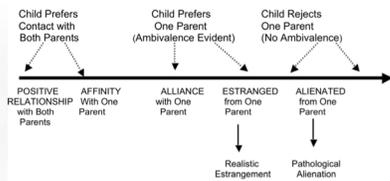
- ▶ There is a frequently a hostile-dependent relationship or otherwise anxious attachment between the alienated child and the alienating parent.
- ▶ There's a continuum in the relationship between children and each parent that ranges between
 - ▶ Equal attachment with each parent
 - ▶ Affinity between child & one parent
 - ▶ Alignment with child & one parent
 - ▶ Child alienated from one parent
- ▶ For children who had a healthy and relatively equal attachment with a now rejected parent prior to separation, alienation is always pathological.

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Figure 2: Background Factors, Intervening Variables, and the Child's Response



A Continuum of Children's Relationships with Parents after Separation and Divorce
From Joan Kelly, Ph.D., et. Al.



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Child Issues in Development of Alienation

- ▶ For children who had a weak and alienated relationship with one parent prior to separation, it's not surprising for this to continue after separation.
- ▶ Many children have a psychological need to take care of the one or both parent after a divorce
- ▶ If the attachments have been insecure, the child may need to take care of the parent who is perceived as emotionally needy.
- ▶ Hostility in marriage increases likelihood that relationships will be tenuous and alienated symptoms will develop.

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In Children Who Are Truly Alienated, We Often See the Following:

- ▶ Fusion of me to "us" ("Dad's taking us to court")
- ▶ Superficial, trumped-up, exaggerated complaints about rejected parent with no substance
- ▶ Contradictory statements that may imply they want relationship
- ▶ They have often heard inappropriate information or make lots of un-childlike statements
- ▶ Character assaults & avoid answering specific questions

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In Children Who Are Truly Alienated, We Often See the Following:

- ▶ Evidence of being used as spies
- ▶ Often kids align with parent in whom the relationship is most tenuous
- ▶ Splitting - all good or bad; fear of contact w/ rejected parent
- ▶ Kids are often asked to be cohorts in keeping secrets
- ▶ Same phrases as alienating parents in describing rejected parent

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Impact of Symptoms on Kids

- ▶ The degree of damage depends on severity & intensity of alienation & age & vulnerability of the child
- ▶ Impact is never benign because of anger, confusions, distortions of reality
- ▶ Children develop problems in relationships
- ▶ Children often feel powerful and become manipulative

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Impact of Symptoms on Kids

- ▶ Child may long for reunion with rejected parent
- ▶ Often they act out or have school problems
- ▶ May start to extort alienating parent to get whatever they want
- ▶ They are likely to develop a significant disturbance in their growing identity

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Best practices for courts

- ▶ Case management – judicial continuity
 - ▶ Judge to gain knowledge of dynamics of the case
 - ▶ gain credibility & respect of parties
 - ▶ short adjournments
 - ▶ early response and avoid delay
 - ▶ Child's resistance may increase over time
 - ▶ parental accountability; clear limits & consequences
 - ▶ review orders & remaining seized after trial
- ▶ Effective use of available expertise
 - ▶ Assessments
 - ▶ Possibility of mediation
 - ▶ Interventions reporting to court

Court orders to structure relations

- ▶ Detailed & specific orders limit scope for parental conflict & facilitate enforcement
- ▶ Consider "multidirectional order" to parents and third parties like schools, MH, using parallel parenting strategies
 - ▶ times & places for transition
 - ▶ rules for communication
 - ▶ Email and text rules
 - ▶ OurFamilyWizard
 - ▶ Manage communication with child - consistent messages, limit triangulation
 - ▶ Obtaining information from third parties
- ▶ dispute resolution tools – with narrow mandates

Analyzing interventions

- A good outcome
- ▶ Restores a **healthy relationship with both parents**
 - ▶ Matches the *relationship* to the *capacities* of both parent and child
 - ▶ Prognosis good if aligned parent is appropriate, rejected parent is calm and patient, both encourage reunification
 - ▶ Prognosis not so good if rejected parent has parenting limitations, chronic conflict: good outcome may be to achieve a strategic or safe distance in reduced parenting role

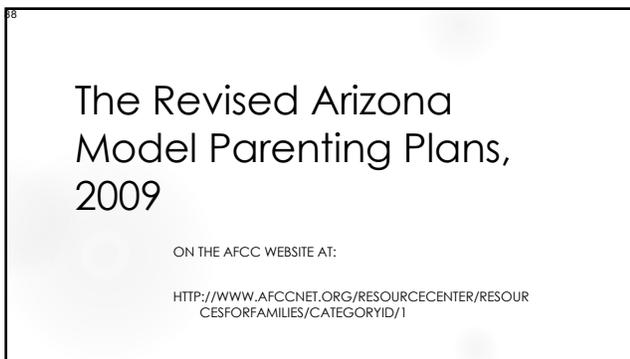
When to stop trying to enforce:

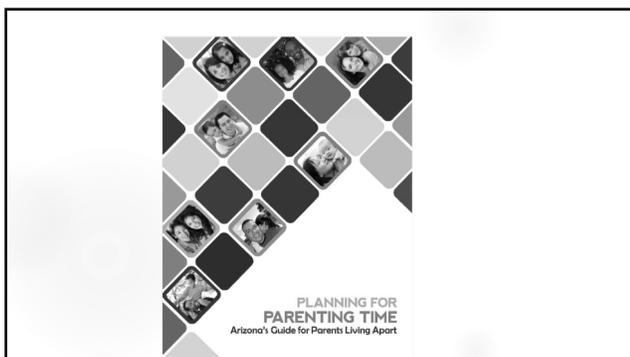
- ▶ Stress to child of enforcement in high conflict cases
- ▶ Child with anxiety / behavioural disorders
- ▶ Challenge of enforcement with determined adolescent
- ▶ If severe alienation, enforcing access may not be in child's interests
- ▶ Possibility of supervised "final" visit
 - ▶ Mode for continuing communication
 - ▶ Plan / openness for the reestablishment of contact
- ▶ Significant incidence of "spontaneous" reunion in late adolescence or adulthood

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In Developing Orders
We Must Must Consider:

- ▶ The child's age and developmental needs
- ▶ The emotional functioning of each parent
- ▶ The respective strengths and weaknesses of each parent
- ▶ The relative attachments of the child to each parent

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In Developing Orders
We Must Must Consider:

- ▶ The degree and intensity of the parental conflict
- ▶ The child's emotional functioning, and
- ▶ The child's wishes

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