

How to Avoid Conflict

Back to School... The Right Way

Divorced parents can avoid conflict by planning ahead for back-to-school and special events, vacations, birthdays and other activities. Such planning is important for parents and children alike because it creates an atmosphere of certainty and is reassuring to everyone. Be sure to pin down the dates and hours of pickup and drop-off with a reasonable grace period if commute corridors are busy during the designated exchange times.

Keep the other parent in the loop: Even if you are the primary custodial parent, share information with the lesser time-share parent. Information on school schedules, special friends, planned trips and how the children are generally doing provides continuity to each parent.

Admit when you make a mistake: Did you arrive late for a pickup or drop-off? In the last exchange, did you fail to return all of the items that were needed for the following school day? It won't hurt to apologize sincerely. In fact, this approach can demonstrate that you are bigger than what happened and that

your focus is on getting it right for the children.

Seek help: If communication with the other parent is badly damaged, consider co-parenting counseling. Avoiding conflict is the best way for everyone to have an enjoyable school year and the holidays.

Knowing your rights is the best legal strategy and the starting point for producing the best outcome when returning to the family law court.

Access for filing is now completely open. Family law courtrooms are not open to the public in Alameda and Contra Costa Counties. San Francisco County is offering Zoom as well as in-person appearances. Masks may be required but expected to be reduced to masks only for the unvaccinated.



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