Parenting Time Schedules

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Parenting time schedules will look different for every family.

**Start by thinking about your children.** How do your children deal with change and transition? Some children are easy going and move from home to home well. Others find moving between homes stressful – in this case you may want to make a plan where the children have a primary residence with one parent and spend time with the other parent on a regular basis. The most important thing to consider is to find a way that each parent shares in the parenting of the children. It doesn’t have to be 50/50 for children to benefit.

**Make sure that the parenting time schedule makes sense for your family.** How close are your and the other parents’ homes to each other? Will your children be able to participate in their favorite sports or other activities no matter which home they are living in? If your children are moving between homes, it’s most important that you and the other parent are able to make this a smooth transition and avoid conflict in front of your children.

**Think about special occurrences for your family.** Where will your children spend vacations, holidays, and special events? It’s important to have a calendar where parents can list the events, dates and hours that children will spend with each parent when there are holidays, vacations and other special events. Often parents alternate years for some holidays. In the case of vacations, it is often helpful to set the dates long in advance so both parents can make plans for that time.

Parenting plans can help parents sort out these important issues related to parenting time. You can include information about your children’s needs, interests, and calendar directly in the parenting plan. Remember, it’s important to get as much as you can agree to in writing so there is no misunderstanding next time a school sport or vacation comes along.

Sources:
