

## Top Ten Reasons to Use Parenting Plan Mediation in Divorce

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1. The best predictor of the well being of children in divorce is in lessening the amount of conflict between parents. In mediation, conflicts are resolved, resulting in a more peaceful post-divorce family life.
2. Mediation helps parents create truly thoughtful and child-focused parenting plans that are tailor-made to suit their children's emotional, developmental and temperamental needs as well as the family's schedule.
3. In thoroughly thinking through the parenting plan, possible weaknesses are identified and preventative measures can be taken.
4. Mediation creates opportunities for parents to work together and build on their strengths as they redefine themselves as a couple within the family, setting a good example for the children. Parents who can model good conflict resolution for children raise children with better conflict resolution skills.
5. A detailed parenting plan sends a message between the parents and others, including the children and court personnel, that parenting is an important priority for both parents, even if one parent assumes more hands-on time with the children.
6. A detailed and thorough parenting plan pre-empts back and forth, 'He Said/She Said,' arguments should differing views of the co-parenting history emerge.
7. Agreements, including modifications, create a record, or 'paper trail,' of what was mutually agreed to when one or both parties were thinking more clearly about the issues involved in successful and co-operative co-parenting.
8. A detailed parenting plan provides a 'good excuse' if new partners, or reluctant children, want to unilaterally change the plan.
9. When co-parents deviate from the parenting plan and then fall into disagreement, a detailed parenting plan provides a useful backup plan until they return to mediation.
10. Mediation provides both parents with the opportunity to explore co-parenting issues with an objective third-party neutral who is a professional trained in children's developmental needs and is knowledgeable about the research on children's adjustment to separation and divorce.