

ADMITTED  
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## Parent Custody Checklist

1. Fitness of Parents
  - Adultery
  - Inability to hold a job
  - Lack of Stability
  - Irresponsibility
  - Excessive use of alcohol/Drug use
  - Violence
  - Quick temper
  - Profanity
  - Poor housekeeping
  - Age and infirmity
  - Depression
  - Suicide threats and attempts
  - Indication of emotional illness
  
2. Role to Date of Each Parent in Nurturing and Raising the Child
  - Who cooks, cleans, does laundry?
  - Who makes and takes child to dental and medical appointments?
  - Who attends school or extra-curricular activities?
  - Who puts child to bed?
  - Who assists child with homework?
  - Who takes child shopping?
  - Who disciplines child?
  - Who participates in religious activities with child?
  
3. The Relationship of the Child to Each Parent
  - Is the child fearful of the parent?
  - Does the child confide in the parent?
  - Does the child respect the parent?
  
4. The Child's Preference
  - How old is the child(ren)?
  - Has the child been pressured into that "preference"?
  
5. The Home, School and Community Environment

- Is child involved in school activities? (Little League, Ballet)
  - Are there kids their age in community?
  - Will school or parents meet special needs?
  - Is child involved in clubs?
  - Is location of home suitable for children?
  - Where is location of school child will attend?
6. The Availability of Support Systems of Each Parent
- Friends
  - Religious groups
  - Occupational atmosphere
  - Remarried
  - Psychologists/Psychiatrists
7. The Lifestyle of Each Parent as a Role Model
- Occupation and work habits (balance between good worker & workaholic)
  - Involvement in community
  - Involvement in church
  - Excessive use of alcohol or drugs
  - Responsibility: who makes decisions in marriage
  - Social life (hours kept): does s/he bring lovers home
  - Cleanliness
8. Accessibility to Extended Family in Each Living Situation
- Where are grandparents, aunts, uncles, cousins?
9. Attitude of Each Parent Toward Visitation
- Who is more likely to allow child continued contact with other parent/current custodian?
  - Has wife/husband interfered with visitation with the child(ren)?
10. The Age and Sex of Each Child
- Male/Female
  - Age
11. Stability and Mental Health of Each Parent
- Responsibility
  - Suicide threats or attempts
  - Depression
  - Indications of emotional illness
  - Alcohol or drug abuse
12. Stability and Mental Health of Each Child

- Special needs of child(ren)  
How can each parent meet special needs?
13. Preservation of Status-Quo
- Who is presently living with child?  
How long?
14. Each Parent's Plans for Day-To-Day Child Care
- Child care arrangements (babysitters)  
Daily living patterns (work hours)
15. Each Parents Goals and Values
- Career goals  
Educational goals  
Personal goals, family  
Priorities (what's most important)  
Adulterous  
Church-going  
Involvement in civic activities and/or charity groups
16. Willingness and Cooperation to Include Other Parent in Lives of Child(ren)
- Help make decisions  
Help with problems  
Keep informed on activities, failures and achievements
17. Potential of Maintaining Natural Family Relations
- With parents?  
With brothers and sisters? (Will there be a distance?)
18. Willingness to Provide Support and Maintenance of Child
- Which parent can meet special needs?  
Which parent can meet financial burden?  
Has parent been helping with support?
19. Prior Voluntary Abandonment or Surrender
- Did parent leave without children?  
How often dos s/he visit or contact the child(ren)?
20. Desire for Cooperative Parenting Agreement Between Parties

Ability/Willingness of parents to negotiate outside of court  
Ability to be reasonable/fair  
Is parent trying to antagonize?

21. Character and Reputation of Parties/Witnesses

Get reputable witnesses  
Grandparents, relatives  
Teachers, school personnel  
Coaches  
Neighbors  
Parents of child's friends  
Babysitters  
Religious leaders  
Activity advisors

22. Involvement of Each Parent in Children's Lives

23. Which Parent is Best Able to Meet Special Needs of Children?

24. Professional Opinions of Where Child Should Go

Psychologists  
Psychiatrists  
Social works

- Who is the child most "bonded" to psychologically?
- Is parent emotionally dependent on the child?