

CAUSE NO. _____

IN THE INTEREST OF:

IN THE DISTRICT COURT

_____ JUDICIAL DISTRICT

A CHILD/CHILDREN

_____ COUNTY, TEXAS

ORDER FOR REUNIFICATION THERAPY AND APPOINTMENT OF COUNSELOR

(or, as needed, use the following alternate titles:)

ORDER FOR CHILD THERAPY AND APPOINTMENT OF COUNSELOR

ORDER FOR CO-PARENTING THERAPY AND APPOINTMENT OF COUNSELOR

On this day, the Court considered the request for therapy, and the Court finds that there is good cause shown for appointment of a counselor to provide therapy as noted herein, and that such an appointment is in the best interest of the child(ren) in this cause. The Court finds that all parties have knowledge of this order; and each party has the ability to comply with its terms.

IT IS THEREFORE ORDERED that _____
[Counselor's name & contact information]

is appointed as Counselor for the parties and the children in question. Each party is ORDERED to contact the counselor's office within seven business days of the signing of this order, to provide a copy of this order to the Counselor, and provide their completed intake paperwork to the Counselor as directed by the Counselor. In addition, they are each ORDERED to schedule an initial appointment. In the event a mutually-agreeable appointment time cannot be set, the Counselor shall select a date for the initial appointment and each party is ORDERED to cooperate with the Counselor in scheduling and appear as directed by the Counselor.

Each party and attorney is ORDERED to provide copies of all current orders, including the currently court-ordered parenting time schedule, to the Counselor and to provide any updated orders within 3 business days of such orders being signed.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that the counselor may meet with the parties or the child(ren) individually, jointly with siblings, with one or both parents, or with other household or family members as they deem appropriate. Each party shall fully comply with the Counselor's requests in conducting therapy, including, but not limited to, ensuring that the child(ren) are transported to and from scheduled appointments in a timely manner and exercising parental authority to require that the child(ren) attend and cooperate with counseling treatments and interventions. The duration, frequency, location, and persons in attendance for each session with the Counselor shall be left to the discretion of the Counselor, who is specifically authorized to notify the Court if any party is failing to comply with the spirit or letter of this order or other orders of the Court.

IT IS ORDERED that each parent shall cause the child(ren) to be transported to any appointment that is scheduled by the Counselor during that parent's possession time, even if those sessions do not involve that parent, or even if those sessions involve the other parent. If specifically requested by the Counselor a parent may bring the child when it is not that parent's possession time, picking the child up and returning the child to their school, daycare, or other location at the time and manner designated by the Counselor.

COMMUNICATION

IT IS ORDERED that the Counselor may communicate and share information with the parties, the parties' attorneys, any parenting facilitator appointed in this case, any of the parties'

or the child(ren)'s individual counselors, or any other professional in connection with this litigation as deemed necessary by the Counselor.

IT IS ORDERED the parties shall execute any authorizations as requested by the Counselor to enable the counselor to receive or provide information about the parties or the children in question. The parties shall notify the Counselor in writing within 24 hours of any changes in their contact information, legal representation, residency, or occupants of their home.

GOALS OF COUNSELING

- i. Improve the parent-child relationship between parent and child;
- ii. Foster a healthy child adjustment;
- iii. Improve the parents' understanding regarding the negative developmental repercussions for the child of disrupted or compromised relationships with their parents;
- iv. Help each parent to distinguish valid concerns from overly negative, critical, and generalized views relating to the other parent;
- v. Improve parental communication regarding their child's needs;
- vi. Reduce conflict regarding parenting time schedules;
- vii. Improve the quality of parenting skills;
- viii. Increase parental insight regarding interpersonal issues;
- ix. Protecting and removing the child from parental conflict;
- x. Fostering the child's healthy relationship with both parents;
- xi. Address emotional and behavioral problems of the child that impair compliance with or implementation of the court-ordered parenting time schedule;
- xii. Assist the child to differentiate himself from others and assist both the child and adults in understanding age-appropriate autonomy;

xiii. Augment the child's coping skills and improve appropriate expressions of the child's emotional experiences; and

xiv. Address the issue of parent's absence from the child's life and how best to reintegrate parent into child's life.

DURATION OF THERAPY [choose one]

→ Therapy shall continue for a minimum of _____ months, with reevaluation of the necessity of continued services based on the parties' progress in meeting Goals of Counseling as noted in above section.

→ IT IS ORDERED therapy shall continue until the Counselor makes the recommendation that the Goals of Counseling as noted in above section have been met, that no further progress is possible at this time, or that appointment of a different Counselor is necessary.

PAYMENT

IT IS ORDERED that the expense of the counseling services shall be divided between the parties as follows: _____% Petitioner _____% Respondent _____% Intervenor, with the exception that the Counselor may assess to each party a pro rata share for time expended for reviewing documentation, out-of-session time, and other individual services.

Each party is ORDERED to pay his or her portions of the fees directly to the Counselor prior to or at the time of service or within seven days of the Counselor's request for payment. If a parent cancels a therapy session less than 24 hours prior to the scheduled session time or fails to bring the child(ren) to a scheduled appointment during that parent's period of possession, that parent shall be responsible for 100% of the cancellation fees.

[WHEN ADDITIONAL PAYMENT PROVISIONS ARE NEEDED

CONSIDER SELECTING FROM THE FOLLOWING]

The foregoing payment provisions apply except for the following situations: *[choose one or more as appropriate; check which apply]*

- Joint sessions with both parents. If both parties participate in a joint session, with or without the child(ren) in question, the costs shall be equally divided between the parties.
- Individual sessions with a parent. If a parent has an individual session with the Counselor, with or without the child(ren) in question, the parent shall pay 100% of the cost of such sessions.
- Review of documents. If a party, the party's legal counsel, or anyone acting on the party's behalf, requests that the Counselor review any documents, that party shall pay 100% of the costs for the time involved in such review. If the request is made jointly, the costs shall be equally divided between the parties.
- Communication with the Counselor. If a party, the party's legal counsel, or anyone acting on the party's behalf, requests to communicate with the Counselor, that party shall pay 100% of any costs. If the request is made jointly, the costs shall be equally divided between the parties.
- Communication with third parties. If the Counselor communicates with a parenting facilitator, any of the parties' or the child(ren)'s individual counselors, or any other professional in connection with this litigation, the costs shall be equally divided between the parties.
- Appearances. If either party requests the Counselor make an appearance in connection with the litigation, including depositions, hearings, trials, settlement conferences, or any other formal meeting,
- the costs shall be equally divided between the parties. **[OR]**

→ the costs shall be paid by the party who requests the Counselor’s appearance. → Written Reports. The cost of any written report that is requested shall be equally divided between the parties.

COUNSELOR TESTIMONY

IT IS ORDERED the Counselor shall testify at any hearing in this case at the written request of any attorney of record sent via subpoena, which may be delivered to counselor via fax or e-mail. Unless payment for testimony is already addressed above, the requesting party shall be responsible for the Counselor’s customary and usual fees for testifying and said fees shall be paid at least seven days prior to the hearing in the manner specified by the counselor.

Therapy is not a substitute for a Child Custody Evaluation within the terms of Family Code Chapter 107; therefore, the Counselor shall not make recommendations as to the conservatorship of, possession (parenting schedule) of, or access to the child(ren). The Counselor may make recommendations to the parties regarding changes in conduct that may be helpful to the parties in implementing the Court’s orders.

IT IS SO ORDERED.

Signed on this _____ day of _____, 20_____.

Judge Presiding

AGREED:

Printed Name:

Printed Name:

Bar Number:

Bar Number:

Attorney for Petitioner

Attorney for Respondent

EXHIBIT A

GOALS OF COUNSELING

The court has found it in the child(ren)'s best interests to have ongoing contact and meaningful relationships with both parents. The following goals are intended to help the child(ren) have genuine relationships with both parents while minimizing exposure to adult issues.

The primary goals of counseling shall be as follows: *[Indicate goals as appropriate to the case]*

PARENT-CHILD INTERACTION

- ➔ Improve the parent-child/adult-child relationship between the child(ren) and
- ➔ Mother ➔ Father ➔ Both parents ➔ Other: _____
- ➔ Work with each parent and child to identify and separate each child's needs and views from each parent's needs and views
- ➔ Foster healthy child adjustment

PARENTING FOCUSED ISSUES

- ➔ Address emotional and behavioral problems of the parent(s) that impair compliance with, or implementation of, the court-ordered parenting time schedule
- ➔ Improve the parents' understanding regarding the negative developmental repercussions for the child(ren) of disrupted or compromised relationships with their parents
- ➔ Help each parent to distinguish valid concerns from overly negative, critical, and generalized views relating to the other parent

- Improve parental communication regarding their child(ren)'s needs
- Reduce conflict regarding parenting time schedules
- Improve the quality of parenting skills
- Increase parental insight regarding interpersonal issues
- Protecting and removing the child(ren) from parental conflict
- Fostering the child(ren)'s healthy relationship with *both* parents

CHILD BEHAVIOR FOCUSED ISSUES

- Address emotional and behavioral problems of the child(ren) that impair compliance with or implementation of the court-ordered parenting time schedule
- Assist the child(ren) to differentiate themselves from others and assist both the child(ren) and adults in understanding age-appropriate autonomy
- Increase child insight regarding interpersonal issues
- Augment the child(ren)'s coping skills and improve appropriate expressions of the child(ren)'s emotional experiences
- Replace distorted impressions with more realistic perceptions that reflect the child(ren)'s actual experience with both parents

OTHER ISSUES

- Gain additional healthy coping skills regarding: _____

- Address the following specific issues: _____

The parties have been advised that the Court will consider the good faith efforts and parties' devotion to success of therapy as a factor in determining whether to modify the current order, including expanding or restricting parenting time provisions. The parties have been advised that successful therapy often requires that they make changes in their own behavior and parenting to support their child(ren)'s needs. The Counselor may request specific changes by the parties in such areas as setting appropriate limits for child(ren), encouraging child(ren) to express feelings and solve problems appropriately, listening to the child(ren)'s concerns, actively supporting child(ren)'s independent relationships, and shielding the child(ren) from parental conflict. The parties shall make reasonable efforts to cooperate with the Counselor's requests in these areas.