



Legal Education
Society of Alberta

62110.00

Advising Small & Family Businesses

Edmonton, Alberta

Calgary, Alberta

Chair

Nolan Johnson

Huckvale LLP
Lethbridge, Alberta

Faculty

Rhonda Elder

Warren Sinclair
Red Deer, Alberta

Ken Proudman

Miller Boileau Family Law Group
Edmonton, Alberta

Ben Hudson

Hudson Law
Calgary, Alberta

LEGAL EDUCATION SOCIETY OF ALBERTA

These materials are produced by the Legal Education Society of Alberta (LESA) as part of its mandate in the field of continuing education. The information in the materials is provided for educational or informational purposes only. The information is not intended to provide legal advice and should not be relied upon in that respect. The material presented may be incorporated into the working knowledge of the reader but its use is predicated upon the professional judgment of the user that the material is correct and is appropriate in the circumstances of a particular use.

The information in these materials is believed to be reliable; however, LESA does not guarantee the quality, accuracy, or completeness of the information provided. These materials are provided as a reference point only and should not be relied upon as being inclusive of the law. LESA is not responsible for any direct, indirect, special, incidental or consequential damage or any other damages whatsoever and howsoever caused, arising out of or in connection with the reliance upon the information provided in these materials.

This publication may contain reproductions of the Statutes of Alberta and Alberta Regulations, which are reproduced in this publication under license from the Province of Alberta.

© Alberta Queen's Printer, 2019, in the Statutes of Alberta and Alberta Regulations.

The official Statutes and Regulations should be consulted for all purposes of interpreting and applying the law.

© 2019. Legal Education Society of Alberta. All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording, or otherwise without the prior permission of the Legal Education Society of Alberta.

ISBN-10: 1-55093-710-3
ISBN-13: 978-1-55093-710-7

Practical Suggestions in Parenting Disputes for Separated Parents

Advising Small & Family Businesses

Prepared by:

Ken Proudman

Miller Boileau Family Law Group

Edmonton, Alberta

For presentation in:

Edmonton, Alberta – February 6, 2019

Calgary, Alberta – February 13, 2019



Legal Education
Society of Alberta

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS IN PARENTING DISPUTES FOR SEPARATED PARENTS

Introduction 2

Your Children..... 2

 Speaking to Your Children..... 2

 Stable Environment..... 4

The Other Parent..... 6

 Ongoing Cooperation and Communication 6

 Rules..... 7

Evidence 8

 Journaling..... 8

 Preserving Evidence 8

 Minimizing Evidence Against You 9

Personal Development 10

 Mandatory Parenting After Separation Seminar..... 10

 Recommended Courses and Literature 10

 Counselling, Therapy, and Local Resources 10

INTRODUCTION

This document provides some general information in relation to your existing and future parenting disputes. This guidance is subject to any advice that your lawyer has given you, any directions from parenting professionals, and any court orders. This document is not “legal advice”; you should speak to your lawyer prior to making any decisions which could significantly affect your matter.

Although you may see the other parent’s negative behaviour reflected in the following examples of improper parenting, that is not the purpose of this document. It is to show that instances of even innocent conduct can be misused or lead to an unnecessary dispute. We strongly recommend that while you read this document, you analyze your own behaviour and memorize these guidelines so that you may properly address future incidents. This document also contains guidance to help you prepare for court in the event that negotiation is unsuccessful or if the conflict escalates.

YOUR CHILDREN

Speaking to Your Children

It is **very important** not to make negative comments about your child’s other parent or discuss any aspect of the parenting and/or financial dispute in front of your children. Doing so may lead the other parent to accuse you of parental alienation (where a child is led to show fear, disrespect, or hostility towards another parent). In extreme circumstances, courts may respond by reducing the time that an alienating parent has with the child or order that their contact with the child be supervised by a third party. In particular:

- **Name calling.** Do not swear or call your former partner, their new partner, their friends, or family members bad names at any time when your child may hear you (eg “deadbeat” or “bitch”).
- **Passing messages.** Do not ask your child to pass along any messages to the other parent. Do not tell your child to address controversial subjects with the other parent. For example, it would be very inappropriate to say “Ask your mother/father why you’re not allowed to have a cellphone”.
- **Legal proceedings.** Do not discuss lawyers or courts with your child. Knowing about interactions with your lawyer or that a court date is looming will only stress your child, and you may be accused of sharing improper information. Also, legal documents should be kept in a secure location that is inaccessible by your child, such as in a locked drawer or at your place of employment.