

## THE BUSINESS OF COOPERATIVE PARENTING COMMUNICATION MODEL

When the parents are unable to have effective verbal discussion, an alternative method of communication is required. When providing information of three sentences or less, such as "I will be a few minutes late;" texting is an effective form of communication, as long as you do not text while driving. It is fast and effective. But, for more than three sentences and not immediately time-sensitive, e-mail is the better form of communication. ***"It should go without saying that parents do not discuss, share, let be overheard, or otherwise involve children in co-parenting matter."*** ***That having been stated, do not, repeat, DO NOT cross that line or you will compromise shielding your child from conflict.***

To help parents to stay child-focused and communicate effectively; electronic mail, known as e-mail, is the better form of communication. Additionally, before it is sent, sometimes it is good to take a break, do something else for a while, then return to the computer and re-read what has been typed. Just as often as something that should not be there is found and deleted, sometimes a better way to state something can be added.

The procedure for non-emergency communication about the child (or children), including methods of frequency, is as follows: primarily with text-messaging and email; with text-messaging used for brief communication and email used for lengthy, more substantive communication as follows:

When initiating communication, each parent shall send a text-message or e-mail to the other parent. The communication shall detail relevant events during the parenting time regarding the child, including medical, school or extra-curricular activities. Further, any upcoming events or appointments shall be detailed in the email. Lastly, any issues that exist for each child shall be summarized along with that parent's thoughts as to how or what must be addressed. The communication shall not be critical in nature, but rather shall be informational and designed to create a dialogue on any issues that require both parties to act.

Within 1 hour for text-messaging and within 24 hours for email, each parent shall send a response in the manner in which the initiating communication was provided. It may state as little as confirmation that the prior communication from the other parent has been received or it may include substantive responses to issues or events noted by the other party.

Each parent is directed to print each text-message (if possible) and/or e-mail and store them in a binder or other filing system. It will then serve as the "record" for critical, non-emergency communication, whether for future decision making or for future litigation purposes.

Emergency communication may include telephonic communication; examples of which may be emergency medical care for the children.

***In ALL communications, Mother and Father shall be respectful in their tone and shall not use any profanities or expletives. The parties also shall not use any substitutes for profanities, such as random keystrokes, and shall not use any changes in font or emphasis to show anger or dissatisfaction. DO NOT insult the other parent, bring up the past unnecessarily, or stray off-topic.***

***Neither party shall make derogatory, disparaging, or similarly negative comments about the other party in the presence of the minor child. Neither party shall discuss family law legal proceedings with the child or use the child as a messenger for parenting issues. Each parent shall encourage love and respect between the child and the other parent, and neither shall do anything which may undermine the child's relationship with the other.***

Slatin Family Services  
Cooperative Parenting Program  
Effective Communication Model