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if (document.addEventListener) { document.addEventListener("DOMContentLoaded",
window.print(), false); } // for Internet Explorer (using conditional comments) /*@cc_on @*/
/*@if (@_win32) document.write(""); var script = document.getElementById("__ie_onload");
script.onreadystatechange = function() { if (this.readyState == "complete") { window.print();
// call the onload handler } }; /*@end @*/
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## **Detailed Parenting Plans Make Planning for Summer Vacation Much Easier and Less Stressful**

Posted by: kstewart in *Untagged* on Jul 29, 2009

The best gift parents can give to themselves and their children is a well thought out detailed parenting plan. Why? Because it avoids a lot of unnecessary debate and stress down the road. Of course the best time to negotiate and write this plan is when you first divorce or separate, but it is never too late.

Good, comprehensive parenting plans cover; money, schedules, education, health, sports and much more. They also should have detailed plans and agreements around summer vacations. The nice thing about a plan is that if made in advance of the event, it will address how to deal with conflict before it actually happens and can even prevent conflict from happening in the first place. Both parents will have a road map with how to deal with parenting issues and scheduling well in advance of any event. While some may feel that a detailed parenting plan is restricting, the opposite is actually quite true – the more detailed the plan – the more freedom for each parent. Each parent is afforded the ability to plan and schedule both with in regards to the children and themselves, well in advance.

And so, when – not if --- disagreements arise, the plan has set out in advance and can serve to keep parents on track with positive co parenting. The plan becomes in valuable as it sets out how to handle the issues well in advance of the event materializing.

Plans around vacation should include agreements in regards to:

- Duration of time to take children away, 2 weeks works for younger families and up to 4 weeks for other children (i.e. one parent gets August and other July for example)

- When parents need to put forth to the other parent when they would like the children for the following summer. Usually the earlier the better, i.e. January for the following summer so that the parties can book vacation time and time off work.
  - Switch off – one parent picks first one year and the other parent the following year and then switch off each year thereafter so fair year to year.
  - Out of state travel – reasonable permission cannot be withheld but details of vacationing spots and time schedules need to be shared.
  - Who will keep passports? Decide in advance.
  - Telephone access should be set out in advance. Usually the parent having the children should be responsible for facilitating phone access and ensuring the stay at home parent gets to talk to the children every second day.
  - Rules for safety, risky sports and activities should be set out in advance. This is not about control as much as about common sense safety measures and awarding the stay at home parent freedom from stress around these kinds of issues.
  - A good plan sets out what camps the children will attend and ensures that parents time is scheduled around them so that both time in camp and with parents is enjoyed during the summer months
  - While often a touchy subject, it is important to discuss when it is appropriate to include new partners in vacation time
- Remember when using a calendar rotation, either one week on or off or every second weekend – do not change the rotation schedule for holidays. Rather, keep to the rotation schedule and fit holidays in, even if it means a longer duration with one parent. This will ensure that over year to year, each parent is afforded the same number of long weekends as well as family holidays.

Then let go and let live.

Enjoy your children and cherish the moments with them. Empower them by empowering yourself.