

Child's Bill of Rights

The Court finds that it is in the best interests of the minor child that the child's emotional, psychological, and developmental needs be affirmatively protected during the exercise of custody by both parents.

Accordingly, the Court hereby adopts the following **Child's Bill of Rights**, which shall apply to both parents at all times and shall be interpreted as a guiding framework for parental conduct, enforcement, and future modification proceedings.

[CHILD'S FULL NAME] ("NAME") has the right to have his well-being protected during his parents' separation and divorce. NAME has the right to love and be loved by both parents and to be shielded from any parental conflict and negativity. Mother and Father are committed to minimizing the negative impact of their separation and divorce on NAME. As such, Mother and Father stipulate and agree NAME has the following rights:

- 1. The right to love both parents.** NAME has the right to love and be loved by both parents without feeling guilty, pressured, or disapproved of.
- 2. Right to be protected from conflict.** NAME should be shielded from parental arguments, criticism, and negative discussions about the other parent.
- 3. Right not to be a messenger.** NAME should not be used as a go-between or forced to carry messages between parents.
- 4. Right to maintain relationships.** NAME has the right to maintain relationships with extended family members (grandparents, aunts, uncles, etc.) without interference from either parent.
- 5. Right to express feelings.** NAME should be allowed to express their feelings about the divorce, and those feelings should be acknowledged and respected by both parents.
- 6. Right to be treated as a person, not a pawn.** NAME should not be treated as a bargaining chip or used to manipulate the other parent.
- 7. Right to privacy.** NAME has the right to privacy when talking to either parent on the phone and in other communications.
- 8. Rights Related to Stability and Support.** Right to a stable routine. NAME should have a predictable daily and weekly routine to provide a sense of security and normalcy.

9. Right to know about important changes. NAME should be informed about major changes in his life, such as moving or remarriage, in advance and in an age-appropriate manner.

10. Right to reasonable financial support. NAME has the right to receive adequate financial support from both parents to maintain his standard of living.

11. Right to maintain their status as a child. NAME should not be expected to take on adult responsibilities or be burdened with adult problems. NAME should be allowed to be a child and enjoy childhood experiences, free from the stress and conflict of divorce.

12. Right to access support. NAME has the right to seek and receive emotional and social support from therapists or other professionals when needed.

13. Rights Related to Legal Proceedings. NAME has the right to not be asked to choose sides. NAME should not be put in a position where he has to choose one parent's side over the other.

14. Right to not be privy to legal details. NAME should not be involved in or informed about the details of the legal proceedings between his parents.

15. Right to not be cross-examined. NAME should not be questioned or cross-examined by one parent about his time spent with the other parent.

By upholding these rights, Mother and Father can help minimize the negative impact of divorce on their NAME emotional, social, and psychological well-being.

By upholding these rights, Mother and Father have a guide by which they can work together in a cooperative and child-focused manner.

By upholding these rights, Mother and Father can reduce conflict, can avoid negativity, and can create a more stable and supportive environment for NAME.

By upholding these rights, Mother and Father will foster resilience in NAME. Children who experience a less stressful divorce are better equipped to cope with the changes and challenges that arise during this period.

The Court orders that each parent shall conduct themselves in a manner consistent with this Child's Bill of Rights. Failure to do so may be considered by the Court in enforcement, contempt, or modification proceedings.