



TEMPLATES • SAMPLE MESSAGES • LOGS

The Co-Parenting Communication Toolkit

Practical, ready-to-use tools for documenting exchanges and communicating with the other parent — calmly, clearly, and in a way that protects you and your child.

Sam Khorroosi
Khorroosi Law Office, P.A.
4601 Excelsior Blvd., Suite 300
St. Louis Park, MN 55416
(612) 361-0693

Please read first

This toolkit is general information and ready-to-adapt templates, not legal advice, and using it does not create an attorney-client relationship. Every family and court order is different. If you have a parenting plan or court order, follow it, and consult a licensed family law attorney about your specific situation.

1. The Five Rules of Co-Parenting Communication

A great deal of co-parenting conflict isn't about the topic. It's about the tone. These five rules keep your messages effective, low-conflict, and safe to be read aloud in a courtroom someday.

Rule 1 — Write every message as if a judge will read it

Because they might. Before you hit send, ask: would I be comfortable if this exact message were printed and handed to a judge? If not, rewrite it.

Rule 2 — Keep it businesslike

Think of it like emailing a work colleague you don't particularly like but have to cooperate with. Polite, brief, factual. No sarcasm, no insults, no history.

Rule 3 — Stick to the children and logistics

If it isn't about the kids, schedules, health, school, or expenses, it probably doesn't belong in the message. Old grievances and relationship issues stay out.

Rule 4 — Respond to the issue, not the bait

If the other parent is hostile, don't match it. Answer the practical question and ignore the jab. Your calm reply is part of your record.

Rule 5 — Don't use the children as messengers

Communicate parent-to-parent. Asking your child to relay logistics or messages puts them in the middle and reflects poorly on the parent who does it.

The BIFF formula

When a message is hard to write, make it BIFF — Brief, Informative, Friendly, and Firm.

- **Brief:** A few sentences. Long messages invite long arguments.
- **Informative:** Just the facts the other parent needs — dates, times, details.
- **Friendly:** A neutral, civil tone, even if you don't feel it.
- **Firm:** Clear about what you're asking or deciding, and closing the loop.

2. Turning a Hot Message Into a Cool One

The same point can be made in a way that escalates — or one that resolves. Here's how to translate the message you want to send into the one you should send.

What you feel like sending	What to send instead
"You're ALWAYS late. You clearly don't care about her schedule at all."	"Pickup was about 30 minutes late today. Going forward, can we keep to 5:00 so she's not waiting? Thanks."
"I can't believe you fed them junk again. Do you even read what I send you?"	"Quick reminder that Liam's allergist asked us to avoid peanuts. Happy to resend the list if helpful."
"You never tell me anything about school. I'm his parent too!"	"Could you forward the school emails when you get them? I'd like to stay in the loop on his assignments."
"There's no way you're taking them on YOUR weekend, that's not fair."	"I see the request to swap weekends. That one's tough for me — would the following weekend work instead?"

The 24-hour rule

If a message makes you angry, draft your reply, then wait. Re-read it the next morning before sending. Almost no co-parenting message is so urgent it can't wait a few hours — and the version you write angry is rarely the one you'd want a judge to see.

3. Ready-to-Use Message Templates

Adapt these to your situation. Replace anything in [brackets]. Keep your real messages roughly this length and tone.

Scheduling & swaps

REQUESTING A SCHEDULE CHANGE

Hi [Name], I have a work conflict on [date] during my parenting time. Would you be open to swapping so I take [alternate date] instead? Happy to adjust to make it even. Let me know what works.

RESPONDING TO A SWAP REQUEST

Thanks for letting me know. [Date] works on my end. I'll plan to have her ready at the usual time and place unless you'd prefer otherwise.

DECLINING A REQUEST — POLITELY AND FIRMLY

I understand the request, but [date] doesn't work for me because of [brief reason]. I'm not able to swap that day. I'm open to finding another date that works for both of us if that would help.

Pickups, drop-offs & lateness

CONFIRMING AN EXCHANGE

Confirming I'll pick up [child] from [location] at [time] on [day]. Please text me if anything changes. Thanks.

ADDRESSING REPEATED LATENESS (FACTUAL, NOT ACCUSATORY)

Drop-off was about 40 minutes late today, which is the third time this month. It's hard on [child]'s evening routine. Can we both commit to the [time] exchange going forward? Let me know if that time itself needs adjusting.

Health, school & day-to-day

SHARING A MEDICAL UPDATE

Quick update: [child] saw Dr. [Name] today for [reason]. They prescribed [medication], one dose in the morning and one at night. I'll send the bottle and instructions in her bag. Let me know if you have any questions.

REQUESTING INFORMATION YOU'RE ENTITLED TO

Could you forward the school's conference sign-up when it comes around? I'd like to attend or schedule my own slot. Thanks for keeping me posted.

Expenses

REQUESTING REIMBURSEMENT FOR A SHARED COST

[Child]'s [activity/medical] cost was \$[amount] on [date]. Per our agreement that's split [50/50], so your share is \$[amount]. I've attached the receipt. Whenever is convenient is fine.

De-escalation

RESPONDING TO A HOSTILE MESSAGE WITHOUT TAKING THE BAIT

I'd rather not get into the back-and-forth. To answer your question: [child] has soccer at 9:00 Saturday and will need cleats. I'll make sure they're in his bag.

SETTING A BOUNDARY ON COMMUNICATION

I want us to communicate well for [child]'s sake. I'm happy to discuss anything about her, but I'd ask that we keep messages focused on her and respectful. I'll always respond to those.

4. How to Document Exchanges and Incidents

Good documentation isn't about building a case against the other parent — it's about having a clear, factual record if questions ever arise. Done right, it's calm, contemporaneous, and fact-based.

What good documentation looks like

- **Factual, not emotional.** "Arrived 45 min late," not "was incredibly disrespectful of my time."
- **Contemporaneous.** Written the same day, while details are accurate.
- **Specific.** Dates, times, who was present, what was said or done.
- **Consistent.** Kept the same way each time, not only when you're upset.

Where to keep it

Many parents use a dedicated co-parenting app (such as OurFamilyWizard or TalkingParents), which date-stamps messages and keeps a shared log courts recognize. A simple notebook or spreadsheet works too. Whatever you choose, keep it consistent and keep originals.

5. Printable Logs & Templates

Print these pages and keep them on hand. They're designed to be filled in by hand or copied into a document or app.

Parenting-Time Exchange Log

Record each scheduled exchange — especially late, missed, or changed ones.

Date	Scheduled time	Actual time	Notes (factual)

Incident Record

Use one block per incident. Stick to what happened.

Date / time:

Location:

Who was present:

What happened (facts only):

Impact on the child (if any):

Any witnesses or documentation:



Track costs that are split under your agreement.

Khoroosi Law Office, P.A. | 4601 Excelsior Blvd., Suite 300 | St. Louis Park, MN 55416 | (612) 361-0693

A Word From Attorney Sam Khorroosi

Co-parenting with someone you're no longer with is hard, and no template makes it effortless. But the parents who keep their communication calm, brief, and child-focused tend to have lower-conflict cases, better outcomes, and, most importantly, kids who feel less caught in the middle.

Use these tools as guides. Lean on them when emotions run high, and keep your child at the center of every message. If you're navigating a custody or parenting-time matter in Minnesota and want guidance specific to your situation, we're here to help.



[Schedule Your Consultation](#)

Khorroosi Law Office, P.A.

Divorce & Family Law • St. Louis Park, Minnesota

(612) 361-0693 • www.khorroosilaw.com

Disclaimer: This toolkit provides general information and sample templates and is not legal advice. It does not create an attorney-client relationship. If you have a court order or parenting plan, it controls. Laws and procedures vary by jurisdiction and change over time. Consult a licensed attorney in your area about your specific circumstances. © 2026 Khorroosi Law Office, P.A. All rights reserved.