

There are two sides to every family law story...



Custody Evaluations

Maggie and Chris are in the process of a divorce and cannot agree what is the best parenting time arrangement for the children. The court has ordered a custody evaluation. Maggie and Chris understand this is a lengthy process of interviews and testing focused on parenting the children.

Now what?

Andi's advice to Dad:

Chris should plan to meet with his attorney to make sure he has a solid understanding of the evaluation process and to work with him or her to prepare an outline of his concerns. He will ultimately need to provide information requested by the evaluator including medical and criminal records (if any). He will also want to speak with friends and family members that have observed his parenting of the children and ask if they will be willing to serve as collateral sources to provide statements to the evaluator on his behalf. Above all, he should remember to be organized in his thoughts and honest about his own strengths and weaknesses as well as those of his spouse.



Andi Lawrence



Andi Mengedoth

Andi's advice to Mom:

Maggie should work with her attorney to develop a strategy in talking to the evaluator; the same as what Chris is doing with his attorney. She should practice with her attorney using appropriate communication skills so that her ideas and concerns are heard. Maggie should focus on the issues that are relevant to the best interest of the children and try to stay away from discussing topics that might be perceived as simply complaints.

Here's what...

Maggie and Chris have now progressed to a place where the opinion of a mental health professional is likely going to be the strongest piece of evidence the court will consider in making an order for parenting time. Hopefully, most families can avoid this invasive and expensive procedure. However, for those who really need this expert recommendation, the court will hear what both parents have to say and how the information is interpreted by the custody evaluator. Courts often make orders for parenting time that track closely the recommendations of the evaluator. Maggie and Chris should expect that in their case as well, and hopefully that will help them work towards settlement prior to trial.

Andi and Andi always support resolution of family issues through open dialogue and amicable settlement.

If you have a family law question that you would like answered, email us at AndivsAndi@HallierLaw.com.



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