



## HIGH CONFLICT DIVERSION PROGRAM

support for parents in conflict

### *22 Indicators of High Conflict Divorce and Custody*

1. There was a large power differential in the relationship (one parent had huge control issues)
2. There were extreme and frequent outbursts of anger in the relationship
3. There was a constant sense of instability in the relationship (not knowing how the other parent was going to react to a situation; a sense of bracing, or of always walking on eggshells).
4. One of the parents reacts like the **other parent is victimizing** them.
5. One of the parents **complains that they feel threatened** by the other parent.
6. One of the parents **accuses the other parent of being neglectful, damaging, absent, controlling, abusive, enmeshed** or overly involved.
7. Either parent **alleges drugs**, including prescription or street drugs, **alcohol abuse, gambling, or pornography**.
8. Either parent accuses the other parent of being **unstable, crazy, erratic, irrational, emotionally disturbed** or **alleges such behavior as indicative of a personality problem or disorder**.
9. One or both of the **parents complains about the safety and well-being of the children** while in the others care.
10. **Refusal to follow the court orders.**
11. Parents **argue that they have been the primary parent before the breakup** or they insist they should be the primary parent now, refusing to agree to a parenting

- plan that incorporates both parents' schedules' providing for access to the children.
12. One of the **parents refuses to reach a child sharing agreement.**
  13. One of the parents has filed for a **restraining order** alleging domestic violence, including stalking, harassment, threats and physical altercations.
  14. One of the parents reacts in and around court hearings by **displaying emotions**, such as being **extremely frightened, angry, hysterical, or anxious**. One of the parents seems to be **deliberately provoking** the other parent into reacting.
  15. Either **parent alleges criminal behavior** or possesses a criminal record.
  16. One of the parents accuses the other parent of **lying**.
  17. There has **been involvement by Child Protective Services ("CPS")** with the parents (or any professional) who has been called upon to assist the family with issues related to the welfare and/or safety of the children.
  18. **Minor's counsel has been assigned** to the case (or is recommended) to provide a voice for the children.
  19. **The parents argue over child sharing percentages** that do not appear to be based upon valid concerns. One parent complains that the other parent has not been involved with the children until now, insists upon imbalanced amounts of time, or communicates to the court that they would be happy to keep the children away from the other parent.
  20. The parents' stories about **child sharing concerns or parenting concerns do not match up with the other parent's concerns**. It is a "he said/she said" argument, making it difficult to determine who is telling the truth.
  21. The case has earned a **negative reputation with the courts because of continuous and/or frivolous litigation**, as well as frequent changes in attorneys/ proper representation.
  22. **Excessive court filings**, or the parents have attended several Family Court Services ("FCS") appointments and continue to argue about basic child sharing issues or custody.