

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF CHATHAM COUNTY
STATE OF GEORGIA

ORDER MANDATING TRANSITIONAL PARENTING SEMINAR

FILED IN OFFICE

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DEPT. CLERK SUPERIOR CT.
CHATHAM COUNTY, GA

Pursuant to the inherent powers of this Court this order is promulgated to establish the Transitional Parenting Seminar which will assist in the speedy, efficient and cost effective resolution of domestic disputes involving children.

Section 1. Except as set out in Sections 5 and 6 below, this order applies to all parties in all divorce, separate maintenance, paternity, change of custody, visitation, legitimation, and other domestic relations actions pending on or filed after March 1, 2017, where the interests of the children under 18 years of age are involved.

Section 2. All parties shall successfully complete the program entitled "Transitional Parenting Seminar." Exhibit A of this order, which is attached hereto and incorporated herein by express reference, describes the seminar, and associated rules and responsibilities.

Section 3. The Seminar shall be successfully completed within 30 days of service of the original complaint upon the defendant.

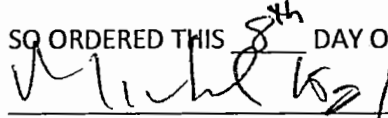
Section 4. Upon a party's failure to successfully complete the seminar pursuant to this order, the assigned judge may take appropriate action, including but not limited to, withholding the final decree of divorce, attachment for contempt, award of attorneys' fees and costs and suspension of custodial rights, including visitation. A party may not invoke the court's power to enforce or modify orders and judgments so long as the party is in violation of this standing order.

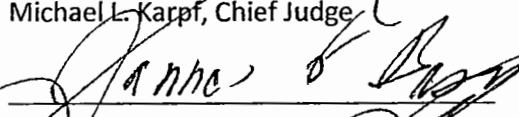
Section 5. Excluded from this Order are (a) domestic violence actions, (b) contempt actions, (c) uncontested changes of custody or visitation involving children who are all 14 years of age or older, and (d) parties who have secured a written exemption or modification pursuant to the rules outlined in Exhibit A to this Order.

Section 6. For good cause shown, the assigned judge may waive or modify the requirement of completion of the Transitional Parenting Seminar in individual cases.

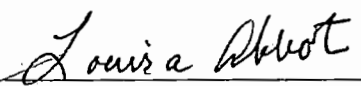
THIS ORDER IS EFFECTIVE AS OF MARCH 1, 2017.

SO ORDERED THIS 8th DAY OF MARCH, 2017.


Michael L. Karpf, Chief Judge


James F. Bass, Jr., Judge


John E. Morse, Jr. Judge


Louisa Abbot, Judge


Penny Haas Freeseemann, Judge


Timothy R. Walmsley, Judge

Exhibit "A"
TRANSITIONAL PARENTING SEMINAR

Synopsis

Attendance at the Transitional Parenting Seminar, a four-hour educational class, is required of all parties in all divorce, separate maintenance, paternity, change of custody, visitation, legitimation and other domestic relations actions pending on or filed after March 1, 2017, where the interests of the children under 18 years of age are involved. Excluded from this requirement are (a) domestic violence actions, (b) contempt actions, (c) uncontested changes of custody or visitation involving children who are all 14 years of age or older, and (d) parties who have secured a written exemption/modification pursuant to the rules outlined in Section 4 below. For good cause shown, the assigned judge may waive or modify the requirement of completion of this program in individual cases. Administration of the Transitional Parenting Seminar is under the Superior Court of the Eastern Judicial Circuit of Georgia through an agreement with the Mediation Center of the Coastal Empire, Inc., (hereinafter "Mediation Center") who will provide qualified, counselors, trainers and educators.

Program Content

Section 1

The Transitional Parenting seminars focus on the developmental needs of children, with emphasis on fostering the child's emotional health during periods of stress. The program is informative, supportive and directs people desiring additional information or help to appropriate resources.

Course content includes: (1) the developmental stages of childhood; (2) the needs of children at different ages; (3) stress symptoms children experience during divorce; (4) age-appropriate expectations of children; (5) the grief process; (6) reducing stress for children through "healthy family transitions"; (7) the business of co-parenting; (8) importance of developing positive shared parenting plans to enhance the child's relationship with both parents; (9) financial obligations of child rearing; (10) conflict management and dispute resolution; (11) anticipating tough situations; (12) how parents living apart can avoid using destructive games: keeping children out of parenting conflicts; and (13) how to get help.

The Mediation Center will follow a proven curriculum that effectively addresses these topics. Each parent will receive a Parent Handbook summarizing the major points of the program, including a reference section for local assistance resources.

Program Schedule and Location

Section 2

In order to accommodate the schedules of all parties, the seminar is offered three times monthly. Each seminar will be four hours on a weekday or Saturday morning. Participants may elect to attend the

session of their choice. A regular monthly schedule will be established and can be found at www.mediationsavannah.com.

All seminars are to be presented on the premises of the Mediation Center at 5105 Paulsen Street, Suite 125 D, Savannah, Georgia 31405 [at the corner of 68Th Street and Paulsen Street].

Attendance

Section 3

Attendance at the Transitional Parenting Seminar is required of all parties in all divorce, separate maintenance, paternity, change of custody, visitation, legitimation and other domestic relations actions pending on or filed after March 1, 2017, where the interests of the children under 18 years of age are involved. Excluded from this requirement are (a) domestic violence actions, (b) contempt actions, (c) uncontested changes of custody or visitation involving children who are all 14 years of age or older, and (d) parties who have secured a written exemption or modification pursuant to the rules outlined in Section 4 below. For good cause shown, the assigned judge may waive or modify the requirement of completion of this program in individual cases.

The Court's action on a petition will not be delayed by a non-moving party's or responding party's refusal or delay in completing the seminar.

Exemptions and Substitutions

Section 4

The Mediation Center shall have the authority to grant certain exemptions or modifications that either (a) exempt a party from attendance at the Seminar altogether, or (b) allow a party to substitute a different educational class in place of the Seminar. These exemptions or modifications may be granted by the Mediation Center in the following situations:

- the party resides outside the Eastern Judicial Circuit of Georgia, PROVIDED that the party instead completes a substitute program either (a) approved by the Superior Court (or corresponding domestic court in states outside Georgia) of the jurisdiction of his or her residency, or (b) deemed appropriate by the Mediation Center;
- the youngest child of the parties is within six months of his or her eighteenth birthday
- the party is incarcerated throughout the period of time the action is pending [upon release, the party is required to attend the seminar if the action is still pending].

Documentation supporting the grounds for exemption must be provided to the Mediation Center. Upon receipt of written documentation of the grounds for exemption, the Mediation Center will evaluate the grounds and documentation and issue a Certificate of Exemption stating the reasons for the exemption. The party will be responsible for paying to the Mediation Center a \$20.00 evaluation fee for the

exemption and the Certificate. The party will be responsible for presenting the Certificate of Exemption to the Court.

Fees

Section 5

A fee per person is required the day of the seminar and is used to cover the costs of the seminar including the presenter's fees, handouts, applications and program administration. Current fee information can be found on the Mediation Center's website, www.mediationsavannah.com. The fee may be reduced if the party qualifies for a reduction of the seminar fee as determined by the Mediation Center. A fee reduction can be requested by completing the Request for Fee Waiver form and submitting to the Mediation Center at least three days prior to the seminar. The Request for Fee Waiver form is available at www.mediationsavannah.com.

Presenters

Section 6

Qualified counselors, educators and trainers will present the seminars. All presenters will be required to observe two seminars and co-facilitate one seminar prior to becoming a presenter.

Registration Process

Section 7

Notification to the parties of their responsibility to complete the seminar or provide alternative verification is provided at the time of the filing of pleadings in the Superior Court. Parties can register for the seminar at www.mediationsavannah.com.

Verification

Section 8

An alphabetical list of all parties participating in the seminar will be developed by the presenters prior to each seminar. This list will be utilized by the presenters and the Court. As parties report to the seminar selected by them, they will provide the presenters identification and they will be recorded as "present" Each person successfully completing the seminar and paying full fees will be given a certificate of attendance to present to the judge of the time of their appearance, In addition, a copy of the certificate of attendance will be forwarded by the Mediation Center to the Clerk of Superior Court within five (5) working days of the seminar. The Mediation Center will retain records of parties who have participated in the seminars for current year plus one calendar year.

Security

Section 9

The Mediation Center will be responsible for providing security at each seminar, including immediately prior to and after each session. Security for participants and presenters will be strictly enforced.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Section 10

Each participant will be asked to complete a written evaluation of the seminar at its conclusion indicating their individual assessment of the value of the seminar and any suggestions for future seminars.