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## Parenting Coordination Services



[www.breakthroughpsychservices.com](http://www.breakthroughpsychservices.com)

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## What is a Parenting Coordinator?

A **Parenting Coordinator** is an impartial third party who helps divorcing or separating families resolve intense conflict regarding co-parenting or Parenting Plans.

A Parenting Coordinator can be appointed by the court or by private parties to provide assessment, education, and intervention.

Parenting Coordinators must be

**(1) Licensed to Practice in the state of South Dakota; (2) Approved by the court pursuant to SDCL 25-4-23 (3) and are required to have significant training and education** in areas of:

- **Child Development & Adjustment Issues** specifically regarding the impact of divorce or separation, parental alienation, domestic abuse, and the psychological and developmental needs of children.
- **Family Resolution and Conflict Management** including interviewing techniques and skills training to help parents develop adaptive behaviors that reduce harm to their child(ren).
- **Family Law** pertaining to high-conflict custody and visitation disputes.
- **Local Resources** available to assist parties in meeting needs outside of the Parenting Coordination scope.

**Parenting Coordination** is a specific area of discipline that adheres to an Evidenced-Based Coordination Model, Standards of Conduct, and Legal and Ethical Guidelines.

**\*A Parenting Coordinator is not** a: Custody Evaluator, Child Protection Worker, Social Work Investigator, Mediator, Family Therapist, Financial Advisor, Attorney, or Guardian ad Litem.



**Family Conflict**

## Why use a Parenting Coordinator?

When children are exposed to ongoing conflict between their parents, they are at significant risk for behavioral, emotional, and even physical problems. These effects, if not addressed, can cause problems at home, at school, and even into adulthood. Parenting coordination teaches parents how to resolve child-related issues without unintentionally causing damage to their child(ren)'s well-being.

Parenting Coordination is also fiscally beneficial in that it helps high conflict families resolve their disputes outside of court and reduces the **excessive use and cost of litigation**.



## When to use a Parenting Coordinator?

Parenting Coordination can be an invaluable tool when...

- Litigation becomes excessive;
- Mediation has not been successful or has been deemed inappropriate;
- The parties have failed to adequately implement their shared parenting plan;
- Parents need assistance developing or modifying their parenting plan;
- The court finds that appointment of a parenting coordinator is necessary to protect the child(ren) from harm caused by the parent's inability to resolve disputes on their own.
- Parents have difficulty communicating information about their child(ren)'s welfare;
- Parents are unable to agree on substantive issues concerning their child(ren);
- There are complex child-related or family issues that require intensive case management;
- The court has entered a temporary or final order setting out the nature and extent of the contact between the child and each parent.