

Center for Psychological Health and Wellness, LLC

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Child Therapy Contract

Psychotherapy can be a very important resource for children especially in case of parental separation and divorce.

Establishing a therapeutic alliance outside of the home can:

- Facilitate open and appropriate expression of the strong feelings which routinely accompany family transitions, including guilt, grief, sadness and anger.
- Provide an emotionally neutral setting in which children can explore these feelings.
- Help children understand and accept the new family composition and the plans for contact with each member of the family.
- Offer feedback and recommendations to a child's caregivers based on knowledge of the child's specific emotional needs and developmental capacities.

However, the usefulness of such therapy is extremely limited when the therapy itself becomes simply another matter of dispute between parents. With this in mind, and in order to best help your child, Center for Psychological Health and Wellness, LLC (CPHW) strongly recommend that each of the child's caregivers (e.g., parents, stepparents, daycare workers, guardian ad litem mutually accept the following as requisites for the child's participation in therapy.

- As your child's psychologist/therapist, it is our primary responsibility to respond to your child's emotional needs. This includes, but is not limited to, contact with your child and each of his or her caregivers, and gathering information relevant to understanding your child's welfare and circumstances as perceived by important others (e.g., pediatrician, teachers, other psychologists, social workers, etc.). In some cases, this may include a recommendation that you consult with a physician, should matters of your child's physical health be relevant to this therapy.
- CPHW staff members ask that all caregivers remain in frequent communication regarding this child's welfare and emotional wellbeing. Open communication about his or her emotional state and behavior is critical. In this regard, we invite each of you to initiate frequent and open exchange with your child's CPWH psychologist/therapist.
- We ask that all parties recognize and, as necessary, reaffirm to the child, that we are the child's helper and not allied with any disputing party.
- We strongly recommend that all caregivers involved choose to participate in psycho-educational groups in which separating and divorced parents learn basic strategies for conducting a divorce in the best interests of the child.
- If you decide to terminate treatment, we have the option of having a few closing sessions with your child to properly end the treatment relationship.
- You are waiving your right to access to your child's treatment records.
- We will inform you if your child does not attend the treatment sessions.
- At the end of treatment, if requested by parent(s), we will provide a summary that includes a general description of goals, progress made, and potential areas that may require intervention in the future.
- You agree that CPWH staff's role is limited to providing treatment and that you will not involve CPHW in any legal dispute, especially a dispute concerning custody or custody arrangements (visitation, etc.).
- You also agree to instruct your attorneys not to subpoena staff of CPHW or to refer in any court filing to anything CPHW staff have said or done.
- If there is a court appointed evaluator, and if appropriate releases are signed and a court order is provided, CPHW staff will provide general information about the child which will not include recommendations concerning custody or custody arrangements.
- If, for any reason, CPHW staff are required to appear as a witness, the party responsible for this participation agrees to reimburse CPHW at the rate of \$400 per hour for time spent traveling, preparing reports, testifying, being in attendance, and any other case-related costs.
- Please be advised regarding the limits of confidentiality as it applies to psychotherapy with a child in these circumstances:

