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Child Custody Questionnaire

PLEASE ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS IN AS MUCH DETAIL AS POSSIBLE, USING ADDITIONAL SHEETS OF PAPER, IF NECESSARY, TO COMPLETE YOUR ANSWERS:

(1) Do you believe there should be joint custody (shared parental responsibility) of your minor child or children in all areas of significant decision-making concerning the child?

_____.

If the answer is “no,” please go to question 3.

(2) Categories of “shared parental responsibility,” other than primary physical residence, may be divided into the following categories (and perhaps more). Please check those you believe should be “shared responsibility.”

Education	Social activities	
Religious training	Discipline	Extracurricular activities
Discipline	Summer camp, travel activities	
Moral Values	Recreational activities	
Medical and dental care	Legal assistance	
Psychological or psychiatric care	Financial involvement	

Please list any other responsibilities you feel should be shared:

If you believe there should be some modified form of responsibility for any of those categories, please name the categories and explain how you feel they should be divided between you and your spouse:

(3) In making a child custody determination, Indiana’s statute requires a court to consider all relevant factors including, but not limited to,

(a) the age and sex of the child;

- (b) the wishes of the child's parent or parents;
- (c) the wishes of the child;
- (d) the interaction and interrelationship of the child with his parent or parents, his siblings, and any other person who may significantly affect the child's best interests;
- (e) the child's adjustment to his home, school, and community; and
- (f) the mental and physical health of all individuals involved.

Please give a detailed statement regarding each of these factors, describing aspects of your own involvement and your spouse's involvement:

Please give details (and examples, where applicable) regarding the following information:

- a. The parent who is more likely to allow the child frequent and continuing contact with the non-residential parent.

Yourself:

Your Spouse:

- b. The love, affection, and other emotional ties existing between the parent and the child.

Yourself:

Your Spouse:

- c. The capacity and disposition of the parents to provide the child with food, clothing, medical care, and other material needs.

Yourself:

Your Spouse:

- d. The length of time the child has lived in a stable, satisfactory environment and the desirability of maintaining continuity.

Yourself:

Your Spouse:

- e. Custodial home.

Yourself:

Your Spouse:

- f. The moral fitness of the parents.

Yourself:

Your Spouse:

g. The mental and physical health of the parents.

Yourself:

Your Spouse:

h. The child's adjustment to his/her home, school, and community.

Yourself:

Your Spouse:

i. The reasonable preference of the child, if the court deems the child to be of sufficient intelligence, understanding, and experience to express a preference.

Yourself:

Your Spouse:

(4) Please set forth in detail what "contact" (visitation) you believe should be allowed to your spouse. Keep in mind that such criteria may very well be used to allow you visitation if your spouse is given custody. In stating your answer, set forth the type of contact during weekdays, weekends, religious and secular holidays, three-day (or more) school holidays, and extended school holidays such as winter break, spring break, and summertime. Please also state why you think any other arrangement than that which you propose may be detrimental to your child.

(5) Please comment on other factors which the court may consider, such as:

- a. Interaction and interrelationship of the child with parent, siblings, and other persons who may significantly affect the child's best interest.

- b. The home where there is the better or more moral and spiritual training.

- c. The home in which there is found better or more love and affection.

- d. The home where the child will have the better or more education and enrichment, fulfillment, and opportunities.

- e. Whether the primary physical residence will require the removal of the child from familiar surroundings and family.

- f. The mental and physical health of the child and which parent can most likely deal with the problems involving the same.

- g. The ability of each parent to discipline himself/herself. Who comes first, the parent or the child?

- h. The parent's ability to discipline the child.

- i. The empathic and emotional responses of each parent to the child's.

- j. The parent's adjustment to life as a single person.

(6) Please comment on the following which relates to your participation in the growth of your child(ren).

a. Describe the personality and behavior of each child:

b. Discuss any of their characteristics or accomplishments of which you are proud. State how you develop same:

c. Describe any difficulties you feel your children are having. State how you cope with same:

d. Do you comfort, give advice, love, and affection, and solace to the children? If so, how do the children seek it and how do you give it:

e. In what ways do you exhibit interest in education? How do you encourage and help in studies and school activities? Do you attend open house at school, speak with teachers about your children's activities and conduct at school? Do you help the children with homework?

f. How are you involved in the lives of your children and how much time do you have for them? In what activities of theirs do you participate, and in yours do they participate, such as: vacations, picnics, outings, sports, cultural enrichment (concerts, operas, plays, museums, libraries, etc.), shopping, work, religious observances, church or synagogue attendance and participation, and community activities?

g. What are your future plans for your children's education? How are you working toward goals and what is child's participation?

h. How are you involved with the children's health and personal hygiene? Do you take your children to doctors, dentists, etc? Do you help to train in personal hygiene habits? Do you help bathe, dress, feed, and put them to bed?

i. Do you discuss with your child(ren) your and their future life plans, your and their future plans toward your remarriage, your and their attitudes towards sex, alcohol, drugs, faults, or other parent?

j. Are you acquainted with your children's friends? In what way do you participate and guide in their peer relationships? Do you children's friends like to visit with the children at their home?

k. Do you know each other your children's favorite colors? What are they?

l. Are you aware of the favorite toys of each of your children? What are they?

m. Do you know whether any of your children have a favorite book which they enjoy? What are they?

n. What type of music do your children enjoy listening to? What is it?

o. Do you know how to reach your child(ren)'s "funny" or "soft" spot? What makes them laugh?

p. If your spouse has temporary custody, how have you been maintaining your relationship with the children? What are the incidences of conflict?

(7) The following questions concern your attitudes toward your children:

a. Do the children trust and rely upon you? Do you trust and rely upon them?

b. In what way do you show love for your children and they for you?

c. What are your attitudes and manner of discipline and punishment? What is the reaction of the children?

d. What have been the children's best and worst school grades, especially since the separation? How do you feel about it, and what, if anything, are you going to do about it?

- e. In what manner are the children allowed to make decisions? Are they given responsibilities?

- f. What effort do you expend and what do you do, if anything, to improve your ability as a parent (PET courses, books, etc.)?

- g. Do you have any problems in coping with the children, their problems, and your attitudes concerning them?

- h. Do you treat each of your children the same? If not, why?

(8) Please answer the following questions concerning the physical arrangements which have been made for your children.

- a. Give a complete description of living quarters where the children will live with you. What is the availability of schools, religious institutions, friends, centers of activity?

- b. Are housekeeping facilities for the children adequate? Are the children comfortable and relaxed in their home? Are they allowed to bring in their friends? Are they restricted to use of any of the facilities?

- c. When not with the children, when at work, going out for an evening, going out of town, what are plans for supervision and care of the children?

(i) Do you give complete instructions on what to do for the children when you are absent? Describe and give examples.

(ii) Do you always tell where you can be reached for any reason? Describe and give examples.

(iii) Do the children appear disturbed by your absence? If so, describe and state how you handle same.

(9) Please answer the following questions pertaining to your involvement with other people:

a. What are your plans for remarriage, if any, and if there are plans, what is the attitude of your future spouse toward the children? What is the relationship between the children and their future stepparent?

b. Do your activities (social, sexual, business, religious, and community) interface in any way with the love you have for the children, your responsibility for them and your time with them?

c. Do your children have to compete with others for your affections such as other children, friends, stepchildren, new spouse, and family?

- d. Are your children disturbed in any way by your going out on dates? Describe how you presently handle or intend in the future to handle the situation?

- e. State your attitude and children's attitude toward remarriage of your ex-spouse (or soon to be ex-spouse).

(10) If there will be a custody contest, then:

- a. List the names, addresses, and telephone numbers of:

All teachers your child had for the past three years, stating when and at what school.

All psychologists, psychiatrists, mental health counselors or therapists, doctors, and dentists who have seen your child for the past three years, stating when and for what purpose.

All friends, neighbors, relatives, and others who can state that you are the better custodian for your child, setting forth what they may say, whether or not they would be willing to testify and their relationship to you (i.e., friend, neighbor, etc.):

- b. Do you desire your child to speak to the judge concerning you? Why or why not?

- c. If you are employed, what arrangements, if any, are being made with reference to your child when out of school? If none, state why no arrangements have been made.

- d. Do you have any immediate prospects of remarriage or a continuing relationship with a person who will be significant in the life of your child? _____.

If so, describe that person's relationship with the child.

With whom do the children, if any, of that person reside, and what are the ages and sex of those children?

- e. If your spouse has such a significant person who will be involved with your child(ren), give information requested in (d) above as to your spouse's significant person.

- f. Do you desire to or do you object to your child(ren) being removed from the immediate geographical area (for example, if you reside in Monroe County, removal away from Monroe, Brown, Owen, or Morgan Counties)?

- g. Is there any basis upon which you may believe that your spouse may at any time leave the area with your child(ren)?

- h. Describe any basis upon which you may believe that your former spouse may leave the area with your child after the court enters a Decree of Dissolution of Marriage.

(11) State the name and address of your parents and whether or not you want to involve them. Their visitation rights may be allowed under Indiana law.

(12) State the name and address of your spouse's parents and whether or not you think your spouse will involve them. Their visitation rights may also be allowed under Indiana law. If you have any objection to such visitation, please explain in detail.

(13) Is there a difference in the religious beliefs (or other important beliefs) of you and your spouse which must be given special attention by the Court and by Court order? If so, explain in detail and set forth your desires.

(14) Is there a need for immediate relief from the Court with reference to the child(ren)? If so, explain in detail what and why.

(15) Do you think that mediation/conciliation services of the Court can help you and your spouse resolve the problems of parental responsibility and visitation?

(16) If the Court decides that there should be shared parental responsibility in all categories (except, of course, residential care) and thereafter you and your spouse disagree as in certain things, do you think that the mediation/conciliation unit of the Court can help resolve the difference? _____. If not, can you suggest how disagreements might be resolved?

(17) Do you think it will be beneficial to try shared parental responsibility in all categories for one year and thereafter revisit the question after seeing whether or not it worked? _____. Please explain.

(18) Are there any factors with reference to your spouse which you believe should be emphasized to the Court, which may affect the decision as to which parent should have the sole parental responsibility, as to residential care, or as to any other category?

(19) As to the above, of which may you be included and state why you believe it will or will not be important for the Court to consider.

(20) Some factors that have been considered by some judges in the past in determining which parent should have sole custodial care are listed below. Please check those that may apply to your spouse and explain in detail on a separate sheet of paper.

Affair committed prior to separation

An on-going affair that continues at this time

Living with a member of the opposite sex with intention to continue without getting married

Sexual promiscuity

Engages in "kinky" sex

Conviction of serious crime

Gambling – occasional, moderate stakes

Gambling – frequent; high stakes

Physical or sexual abuse of the child

(21) Any others that you believe may be important:

(22) As to each o the items in (20 or (21) that may apply to you, state why you believe it will or will not be important for the Court to consider.

(23) List the 5 best things your spouse might be able to say about you concerning your parenting abilities and your relations with the child.

(24) List the 5 words things your spouse might be able to say about you concerning your parenting abilities and your relations with the child.

(25) List the 5 best things you are able to say about your spouse concerning his/her parenting abilities and his/her relations with the children.

(26) List the 5 worst things you are able to say about your spouse concerning his/her parenting abilities and his/her relations with the children.

Signed: _____ Dated: _____