

Child-Centered Family Evaluation Summary Report and Recommendations

In the matter of:

In the best interests
of the minor child:

Conducted by:

Submitted:

I. Authority and Scope: This report summarizes data collected throughout the course of a Child-Centered Family Evaluation for the purpose of advising the Court how best to understand and serve the psycho-social needs of the children identified above.

This evaluation was conducted in concert with the Court's order of _____, and the parties' mutual endorsement of a Service Agreement dated _____ detailing the nature and limits of this process. In relevant part, this writer has been recognized as a child-centered expert, neutral to the adult conflict and qualified to advise the court in matters relevant to the future allocation of parenting rights and responsibilities.

II. Limitations: The validity and thereby the practical value of the extant evaluation and this summary report are necessarily limited by a number of factors, most notably:

(A) Child-centered family evaluation (CCFE; also known as "custody evaluation") seeks to advise the Court regarding one or more children's best psychological interests in the context of litigated family conflict. In due consideration of the intense emotions and potentially powerful implications of this process, every effort has been made to approach this matter in a thorough, objective and child-centered manner. Nonetheless, parties have been advised that there presently exists no wholly reliable and valid procedure for fulfilling this mission.

- (B) The present report seeks to integrate a great breadth of child-centered data, but is nevertheless necessarily limited by the bias of reporters, by the reliability and validity of assessment protocols and standardized instruments, and most broadly by a lack of consensus within the scientific community as to what constitutes “the best [psychological] interests” of a child and how to optimize any such developmental/familial outcome.
- (C) The child(ren)’s psycho-social needs must be understood as constituting one among a number of factors reasonably considered under the best interests formula. This report is therefore limited to the extent that it does not incorporate other relevant criteria (e.g., the parents’ respective financial standing) when speaking to the future allocation of parenting rights and responsibilities.

With these and related limitations fully in mind, the undersigned respectfully submits this summary and accompanying recommendations in the belief that every effort has been made to be comprehensive in scope, conservative in interpretation and child-centered in advising the court.

III. Access to the present report: This report incorporates and summarizes information which may be emotional, provocative, and otherwise very personal. As such, this report will be delivered to _____ in _____ role as Guardian ad litem, in the first instance and may be disseminated thereafter to parties and/or counsel at her discretion.

In no instance should any child be allowed access to this report, in whole or in part, intentionally or otherwise, unless and until the Court has directed otherwise.

In the interest of helping the reader digest these pages, the data and recommendations presented here are organized as follows:

Section	Header	Page
I.	Authority and Scope	
II.	Limitations	
III.	Access To The Present Report	
IV.	Data Reviewed	
V.	Brief Family History	
VI.	Regarding _____	
VII.	Regarding _____	
VIII.	Regarding The Minor Child, _____	
IX.	Regarding _____’s Relationship With Her Father	
X.	Regarding _____’s Relationship With Her Mother	
XI.	Regarding The Co-parenting Relationship	
XII.	Regarding Particular Issues:	

- A. The Process Of The Present Evaluation
- B. School Memorabilia
- C. Alienation And Estrangement

XIII. Impressions and Recommendations

IV. Data Reviewed: The documents, materials and resources consulted in preparing this report include but may not be limited to::

A. Interviews with and/or observations of:

Name	Role	Date(s) of Contact
	Father	
	Mother	
	Son	
	Daughter	

B. References and/or relevant third parties:

Name	Role
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V. Brief Family History:

VI. Regarding **Father (dob: _____):**

- A. Medical concerns/limitations:**
- B. Developmental/Educational history:**
- C. Psychological functioning:**
- D. Substance use, abuse and/or dependence:**
- E. Home, employment, social supports and co-parent support:**

- F. Parenting strengths and weaknesses:
- G. Expressed concerns about _____:
- H. Expressed wishes and rationale for the custody outcome:

VII. Regarding **Mother** (dob: _____):

- A. Medical concerns/limitations:
- B. Developmental/Educational history:
- C. Psychological functioning:
- D. Substance use, abuse and/or dependence:
- E. Home, employment, social supports and co-parent support:
- F. Parenting strengths and weaknesses:
- G. Expressed concerns about _____:
- H. Expressed wishes and rationale for the custody outcome:

VII. Regarding the minor children:

- A. _____ (dob: _____):
 - 1. Developmental history:
 - 2. Medical concerns/limitations:
 - 3. Educational history and present functioning:
 - 4. Psychological functioning:
 - 5. Substance use, abuse and/or dependence: None alleged or reported.
 - 6. Social functioning and supports outside the family:
 - 7. Coping strengths and weaknesses:

The adults see _____ as follows:

- 8. Expressed concerns about the family:
_____ describes _____ parents using a standardized adjective sort as follows:

Mother		Father	

(Bold entries were endorsed independently on separate administrations)

- 9. Expressed wishes and rationale for the custody outcome:

B. _____ (dob: _____):

1. **Developmental history:**
2. **Medical concerns/limitations:**
3. **Educational history and present functioning:**
4. **Psychological functioning:**
5. **Substance use, abuse and/or dependence:** None alleged or reported.
6. **Social functioning and supports outside the family:**
7. **Coping strengths and weaknesses:**

The adults see _____ as follows:

8. Expressed concerns about the family:

_____ describes _____ parents using a standardized adjective sort as follows:

Mother		Father	

(Bold entries were endorsed independently on separate administrations)

9. Expressed wishes and rationale for the custody outcome:

VIII. REGARDING the child(ren)'s relationship with Father:

IX. REGARDING the child(ren)'s relationship with Mother:

X. REGARDING the Co-parenting Relationship:

The two parents each completed a prioritizing task independently as follows:

Item <i>(priority ratings where 1=highest priority)</i>	FATHER's priorities	MOTHER's priorities
My own happiness		
My own physical and mental health		
A successful co-parenting relationship with my child(ren)'s other parent		
My child(ren)'s other parent's happiness		
My child(ren)'s other parent's physical and mental		

health		
Finding a new partner or spouse for myself		
My child(ren)'s physical and mental health		
My child(ren)'s happiness		
The quality of my child(ren)'s relationship with me		
The quality of my child(ren)'s relationship with their other parent		
The quality of my child(ren)'s relationship with my new/future partner or spouse		
The quality of my child(ren)'s relationship with their other parent's new/future partner or spouse		
My ability to provide for my child(ren) financially		
The comfort of the home that I provide for my child(ren)		
The amount of time that I'm with my children each week/month		

(where shaded rows highlight differences of 3 or more priority levels between the respondents)

Notable are the following generalizations based upon these responses:

- _____
- _____
- _____

XI. REGARDING the _____ Other parties, issues _____ X:

XII. RECOMMENDATIONS:

In light of the foregoing, the undersigned respectfully recommends the following as best suited to these children's interests and well-being:

A. Legal decision making authority:

B. Residential Responsibility:

1. In the interest of the co-parents' communication and consistency
2. In the interest of _____

(a) This writer's first priority is the children's safety and well-being in all of their caregiving environments. Second to safety is the establishment of a schedule of contact which allows the children to reasonably predict when and where they will next see each of their parents. In this regard, the schedule of contact should be fixed and immutable, save interruptions due to matters of health or safety (e.g., extreme weather).

C. In addition, the present investigation yields the following various recommendations:

With gratitude to parties, their beautiful _____, their respective references and associated professionals for their able and willing assistance in completing this investigation, I am,

Respectfully,

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