## SAMPLE PARENTING AGREEMENT

We, (Parent!) and (Parent&), the parents of (List all kids' names) enter into this agreement to better meet our parental responsibilities and to safeguard our children's future development. We both recognize that they wish to love and respect both of us, regardless of our marital status or our place of residence, and that their welfare can best be served by our mutual cooperation as partners in parenting and by each of us providing a home in which they are loved and to which they belong that being both households. We also recognize jointly that court proceedings regarding children and custody and visitation matters can be stressful to our children, and we therefore have decided to resolve these questions ourselves, using this binding Parenting Agreement. Finally, we have chosen to avoid the traditional terminology surrounding divorce and children by using terms that more accurately describe the reorganization of our former family to new, one parent families. Accordingly, we wish to instruct our respective attorneys, if necessary, to inform any courts involved in our dissolution that our desires are as follows regarding the custody and upbringing of our children.

**Terminology:** In order to reaffirm our commitment to our equally appreciated two-household status, we choose to use the terms "live with Parent&/Parent!" and "live with Parent!/Parent&" in describing our arrangement, rather than the more traditional one home, one visitor terminology of "custody and visitation."

Responsibility for (children names): (Children) will be our joint responsibility. Both of us recognize that each of our contributions towards our children's welfare is real and genuine, and we agree to cooperate with one another on establishing mutually acceptable guidelines and standards for development, education, and health. We agree further to discuss all major issues jointly and that day-to-day decisions for the children will be the responsibility of the parent in residence. Each of us will have equal access to all health and school records and unlimited phone contact with our children. Children will live with Parent! every other Friday beginning at 6:00 PM through the following Monday at school time. The remainder of the time they will live with Parent&. During the summer vacation they will live with their Parent! the entire months of July and August. This schedule will continue throughout this year unless the children's normal development seems impaired by this arrangement. Changes and scheduled times at either home will require immediate substitutions of times equal in length and will be subject to our mutual approval. If an acceptable substitute is not found, the parent unable to be home with the children will hire a sitter or plan for friends or relatives to care for the children during the period of responsibility.

**Contributions:** Each parent will contribute time and energies daily toward the children's day-to-day care when the children live with that parent. Parent& will contribute \$225 per child (child support) to offset the expense incurred in Parent!'s residence on or before the 15th of each month during the summer months, when the children live with Parent&, the contribution will be reduced to \$200. The Parent! agrees to give Parent& a written simplified accounting of this contribution three times per year on the 1st of January, May, and August.

**Medical and dental:** It is agreed that one parent will carry and pay all the costs of the children's medical health insurance. And the other Parent! agrees to pay 75% of all medical costs above and beyond that covered by insurance. Dental costs will be paid by Parent!. We also agree that transportation to medical appointments will be the responsibility of the parent-in-residence. We also agree that although the parent-in-residence has final responsibility in making day-to-day medical decisions, the other parent is

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to be involved in all major discussions and decisions and consulted and advised about illnesses or accidents.

**Education and childcare:** Both parents agree that children will remain in their present schools and childcare arrangements will remain the same for this year. Tuition costs will be the responsibility of the Parent! and childcare costs the responsibility of Parent&. We agreed to attend teacher conferences on a rotation basis, to be active in school events as our schedules allow and that we will both have full access to information and records regarding our children's progress.

Holidays: We both agree that the Thanksgiving holiday, beginning with the day before and ending the following Monday morning at school time will be this year with Parent&; and next year with the Parent!. We further agree that this year children will live with Parent! for the first week of Christmas vacation through the 27th of December, and then the children will be with Parent&. Next year the situation will be reversed, and the children will spend the Christmas period first with Parent&. Other Holidays, Memorial Day, school Holidays and Easter vacation will be negotiated between the parents.

Children's activities: Summer activities will be the responsibility of the Parent! and will also be undertaken at that parent's discretion and expense. School year activities are anticipated to be [activity 1] and [activity 2] for child 1 and [activity 3] for child 2. We agree to the continuance of these activities and will share the responsibility for transportation, cost, and communications in the following manner: [activity 3] will be supervised by Parent! and all cost incurred will be met by Parent!. [Activity 1] and [activity 2] will be the responsibility of the Parent&, and all costs will be met by Parent&. It is not anticipated that [activity 1] will continue past June of this year. If they do, however, the Parent! agrees to transport the child during which time Parent! is the parent-in-residence so that [child 1] can complete any agreed upon activities.

Respecting one another's parenting style an authority: We agreed to honor one another's parenting style, privacy, and authority. We will not interfere in the parenting style of the other parent, nor will we make plans or arrangements that would impinge upon the others parent's authority or times with the children without the expressed agreement of the other parent. Furthermore, we agreed to encourage our children to discuss their grievances directly with the parent in question. It is our intent to encourage a direct child-parent bond.

Agreement Period and renegotiations for new agreement: We both agree that this Parenting Agreement is to be in effect a minimum of two years and is automatically renewable if no revisions are sought. If revisions are sought after two years, we agree that this agreement will be considered binding until a new agreement is reached. If unusual circumstances arise before the end of the two year period, all or part of this agreement can be negotiated, either privately or with the aid of a third party, given 30 days' notice before either of us seeks modification through the courts. We further agree that should any serious dispute arise between us relating to our child's education, health, or other aspect of their welfare, before either of us seeks modification through the courts, we will first seek the services of an objective third party, such as a trained counselor or arbitrator.

SIGNED & DATED WITNESSED