

Infancy to Two and a Half Years

Developmental Guidelines for Residence and Visitation Arrangements

<u>Developmental Tasks</u>	<u>Child's Divorce Issues</u>	<u>Recommendations: Parents Living Close to Each Other</u>	<u>Recommendations: Parents Living Far Apart</u>	<u>Risks</u>
<p>Infants</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Build attachment to primary caretaker Form trust in the environment <p>Toddlers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Begin to develop a sense of independence Increased self-awareness assisted by emergence of language and locomotion Growing capacity to use symbols for comforting self 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Feeling of loss of contact with primary caretaking parenting Feeling of loss of familiar and comfortable environment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Select primary residence based on caretaking history Non-residential parent has short, frequent visits as often as daily, depending on availability and caretaking history If dual primary parents, share daytime caretaking, establish one nighttime caretaker, tailoring around work schedules to minimize daycare and transitions Overnights are not recommended 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> One parent travels to the residential area of the primary parent to facilitate visits in familiar surroundings Maintain long-distance relationship (see Appendix C) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Feeling of loss of contact with primary parent results in symptoms of depression and regression (acting younger) Too long a separation from primary caretaker may result in problems with separation and relationship capacity in later stages of development

Two and a Half to Five Years

Developmental Guidelines for Residence and Visitation Arrangements

<u>Developmental Tasks</u>	<u>Child's Divorce Issues</u>	<u>Recommendations: Parents Living Close to Each Other</u>	<u>Recommendations: Parents Living Far Apart</u>	<u>Risks</u>
Continued growth of individuality and sense of self	Magical thinking resulting in sense of responsibility for divorce	Time initially distributed in proportion to parent's direct caretaking prior to divorce	One parent travels to the residence area of the other	Losing mastery of developmental tasks previously mastered
Capacity to hold absent parent in mind to comfort self for extended periods	Anxiety around basic needs being met—feeding, shelter, visitation logistics, and abandonment	May introduce longer visitation periods for child gradually throughout this stage to a maximum of a split week	Child overnights—2 to 3 days maximum	Loss of opposite-sex parent as socialization agent or loss of same-sex parent as identification model
Verbal skills develop for expression of feelings and needs	Fantasizes intact family and denies divorce	Implement overnights for child--1 per week initially, extend to a maximum of 3 per week toward the end of this stage	Must have encouragement and help to maintain essential phone and letter contact with absent parent between visits	Experiencing feelings of abandonment may result in sadness, depression, low self-esteem, and interference with development
Regulation and mastery of emotions and bodily functions	Fantasies and actions relating to reuniting of parents	Long-weekend, short-weekend concept, preferably including a weekday visit, is a possibility if one parent works full time during the week and the other does not	Carry photographs, transitional objects, and memorabilia of absent parent	Carrying power struggles characteristic of this age to later phases of development
Increasing identification with same-sex parent	Transition difficulties in moving between households can be expected			