

## **Mullens Plan (Example, Australia, NSW 1997)**

### **PARENTING PLAN**

We, David Mullens and Mary Hamilton, are the parents of John Mullens and Olivia Mullens.

#### **1. General principles**

Although we have chosen to no longer live together or to be married to each other, we will both continue to be active and involved parents to our children. We have generally agreed on parenting issues to date and intend our parenting to remain co-operative, united and consistent as far as possible in the circumstances.

We also believe that, as well as being our desire, it is in the best interests of our children that they have close and loving relationships with both of us for as long as they want that to continue.

We agree that:

- We are both competent, trustworthy and loving parents
- We are equally responsible for the parenting of our children. Irrespective of where the children are living, we both have a responsibility and a right to participate in significant parenting decisions, and agree to regularly consult each other and keep each other informed about parenting issues
- We will endeavour to maintain a friendly relationship between us.

#### **2. Naming**

Our children are named John Mullens and Olivia Mullens and are to be known by these names.

Each of us will refer to the other as the children's mother or father. We will not encourage the children to call any other person mother or father.

#### **3. Shared Parenting**

We agree:

- To regularly discuss the children's progress in all emotional, physical and other development.
- To consult with each other before making any significant changes to rules affecting the children, such as acceptable foods, TV watching, bedtimes, homework, pocket money etc.

- To attempt to keep each other informed about intended or actual minor changes to rules affecting the children.
- We will seek and value the children's wishes regarding these shared parenting arrangements and act on these, taking into account what is appropriate considering the children's age.

#### **4. Religion/Faith**

Mother's Religion/Faith: Church of England

Father's Religion/Faith: Catholic

The children have not to date been brought up with any particular religious orientation. They may be exposed to either Church of England or Catholic doctrines, ceremonies and celebrations as they or we desire.

#### **5. Health and emotional well-being**

We will foster good health and emotional well-being in our children.

To ensure this we will:

- Make joint decisions about our children's health and emotional well-being, whether they are living with one or both of us
- Agree not to denigrate each other and endeavour to maintain a friendly relationship between us
- Ensure that our children's milestones (for example birthdays) are acknowledged whether they are living with one or both of us
- Keep each other informed about our children's emotional and physical health status
- Inform those who may take on the care, education or treatment of our children of any important medical information
- Share the care of our children should they become sick or otherwise incapacitated.

We agree to continuously discuss and review the children's behaviour and any possible disciplinary action. We agree not to use physical discipline (hitting), humiliation or shaming and we will ensure that anyone else to whom we entrust the care of the children will also abide by this.

#### **6. Living Arrangements**

We will endeavour to provide the best possible living arrangements for our children, taking into account our abilities.

The children will live for approximately half of each week with each of us at our home addresses. We can negotiate variations in the weekly arrangement by mutual agreement. The intention is that over a period of time, the children have equal time with each parent.

We agree that each of us has a right and responsibility to be confident in the suitability of anyone who is caring for, minding, disciplining or significantly influencing the children for any significant period of time. For example, if either of us intends that a nanny, child-minder, boarder or live-in partner should have regular contact with the children, we recognise that the other parent has legitimate interests concerning such relationships and agree to introduce the other to the person concerned before making such arrangements.

We also agree that:

- We will advise each other of any proposed travel or overnight visits outside the usual residential arrangements.
- The parent with whom the children are living on any day is responsible for their care on pupil-free days, if they are sick, or during school or public holidays. That parent is also responsible for supervising and other school-related activities and extra-curricular activities.
- The children can phone the other parent at any time and vice versa (within reason).
- We will not make any plans for holidays outside the normal residence arrangements without gaining the other parent's consent. We will inform each other of any holiday plans in advance, with suitable details such as travel times, contact phone numbers etc.

## **7. Education**

We will:

- Ensure that we provide the most appropriate educational opportunities for our children
- Encourage them to pursue their educational interests and enthusiasms
- Supervise and support homework, home study and practice.
- Share equally the costs of their education.

Each parent has the right to participate in activities and receive information regarding our children's education, irrespective of which parent is caring for the children at the time of any school activities. We will pass on to each other any information we receive about our children's education.

Our children will continue to attend South Hometown School unless we mutually agree to move one or all of them to another school.

They will travel by bus or car to and from both homes.

We will consult each other about Life Skills education issues and extra-curricular activities. We will share the costs of any such activities mutually agreed to.

## **8. Family**

We agree to foster a close relationship between the children and their immediate and extended families by arranging regular visits and telephone contact.

## **9. Child Support**

We agree that we will share equitably in the costs of raising our children and that we will jointly make financial decisions about our children whether or not we each contribute equally in financial terms to their support.

We agree to open a jointly-held account. We pay the following child-related expenses from this account:

- School fees, school related expenses, and other tuition fees
- Contributions to educational trusts
- Medical/dental
- Clothes, shoes etc.

Each of us will regularly pay an agreed amount (presently \$500 per month) to this account to cover anticipated costs plus some extra. The account can be topped up from time to time by mutual agreement. Payments such as family allowance and Medicare rebates go into this account.

Other living expenses, including holidays, food and furniture are the responsibility of the parent who the children are with at the time, except by consent.

## **10. Death of Parents**

We agree that, in the event of the death or incapacity of one of us, the other parent will assume full responsibility for the care, welfare and development of our children.

We both agree to bequeath to the children a sufficient proportion of our estates to ensure that their living and educational costs can be met.

## **11. Communication, Consultation, Information sharing and Conflict resolution**

We agree to:

- Share as much information about our children as possible in the circumstances
- Share information with our children to ensure that, as far as practical and in an age-appropriate way, they remain reassured that the separation of their parents has not diminished their relationship with them and that they are not left insecure about the future. We acknowledge the children's right to know about changes in family relationships and the desirability of involving them in decisions that will affect them, such as proposed changes to living arrangements, introduction of new partners, etc.
- Resolve conflict constructively, co-operatively and in the best interests of our children.

If we experience a conflict over the parenting of our children which we cannot resolve ourselves, we will seek counselling or mediation to resolve the issue.

## **12. Re-evaluation of the Parenting Plan**

We agree to review this Parenting Plan as a matter of course, in June of each year, until we decide it is no longer required. We will also review the Plan at any other time:

- As our children's needs and/or circumstances change.
- As our needs as parents and/or circumstances change.
- At the request of either of us, or the children.

For example:

- Before either of us moves home.
- If either of us re-partners.
- If another child is born.
- After a family crisis or death.
- When each child completes Primary School.

We agree to do this together.

## **13. Changes to the Parenting Plan**

Changes to the Parenting Plan will be made only when we both agree. If any disagreements arise over changes to the Parenting Plan, then a co-operative process like mediation will be used to resolve them.

## **14. Acceptance**

**PARENTING PLANS: Mullens' Plan**

We acknowledge that we need to implement the Parenting Plan in both practice and spirit for the well-being of our children and ourselves.

We have each carefully considered the provisions contained in the Parenting Plan and exercise our informed choice by signing it. We agree that we will each keep a copy of the Parenting Plan.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Source: The original parenting plan is no longer available on the internet.

However a copy and a variant are available at:

Copy: <http://forum.dadsontheair.com/viewtopic.php?t=1239>

Variant: <http://www.airtravellers.com/plan.htm>