

# St. John's Counselling Service

## Co-Parenting Through Separation & Divorce Program

### Program Philosophy

*Co-Parenting Through Separation & Divorce Program* is based upon the philosophy that parents who live apart can still provide an effective, nurturing and safe environment for their children to develop into happy, healthy individuals. We understand that divorce is not a pleasant and easy experience for all parties, and the changes experienced by children brought about by divorce often times require a new set of parenting skills.

### Program Focus

The primary focus of co-parenting is to ensure that the best interests of the children are being met by parents who live apart. One of the most common needs for children during divorce is helping children deal with *loss* and *new relationship dynamics*. Our program embraces the principle that when children are properly guided and nurtured with effective co-parenting during these unpleasant changes divorce may bring, they have a greater opportunity in maintaining and further developing positive relationships with both sets of parents and others.

Hence, our program will demonstrate how to build a *working co-parenting relationship* to ensure that two basic children needs are being met: **nurturing** and **guidance**. Studies clearly indicate that involving children in the matrimonial conflict greatly increases their chances to develop academic, emotional and social problems that could affect their lives for many years to come. Thus, we understand the marriage has ended but the parenting roles remain and require consistent co-parent collaboration, not ongoing adult agitation.



### What St. John's Counselling Service Co-Parenting Through Separation & Divorce Program is NOT:

- Is not a mediation service for marital dispute.
- Is not a medical-legal service to determine mental capacity of either parent.
- Is not a social welfare service to determine which parent is awarded primary custody and care.
- Is not marital counselling to resolve past and current marital issues.
- Is not a counselling activity to determine which parent has the better parenting skills.
- Is not a process where a psycho-social report is generated for lawyers and family courts.
- Is not a service to separate and prevent children from being with caring and loving parents.
- Is not family therapy to argue and dispute over your family of origin issues and concerns.

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Counselling & Psychotherapy

# Co-Parenting Through Separation & Divorce Program

## Program Highlights

St. John's Counselling Service's Co-Parenting Through Separation & Divorce Program is based upon our 36 years of clinical experience in marital, relationship and family therapy in conjunction with best practices in co-parenting programs from the UK, Canada, U.S. and Australia. The Parents Forever™ program (approved program recognized by the state of Minnesota judiciary) is one particular benchmark we have modeled our program after to ensure our parents receive internationally recognized and proven co-parenting training. Concurrently we will also pay careful attention to the various cultural factors that many couples bring forth in divorce and integrate those specific elements into their program to enhance the overall co-parenting training.

## Program Details

1. Program Director is Clinical Psychologist (U.S.) and Executive Director of St. John's Counselling Service, and Program Facilitator Ms Lora Lee is a uniquely qualified child therapist with graduate degrees (U.K.) in Play Therapy and Developmental Psychology and trained in the U.S. Parents Forever™ program.
2. Program is structured for couples and/or individuals
3. Each session is 50 (fifty) minutes long, 10 (ten) sessions required for course completion
4. Training can be conducted in English and/or Cantonese
5. Appointments can be made daytime, evenings and/or weekend
6. Program is both general and customized for each co-parent program
7. Topics include the following:
  - Defining effective and non-effective parenting styles
  - Understanding what are the best interests of each child
  - Explaining the issues and challenges of child – teen developmental stages
  - Managing emergencies and unforeseen circumstances
  - Developing a conflict management approach that minimizes stress and harm
  - Providing access for children to both set of parents
  - Introducing children to their parents new partners and friends

### Co-Parenting Through Separation & Divorce Program Fees and Registration

1. Registrants are accepted by way of self-referral, family court, family lawyers, social welfare organizations, health care professionals, schools
2. Fees are based on a sliding fee scale – means test
3. Payment is accepted by cash or credit card only

## St. John's Counselling Service

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**Disclaimer:** any and all sessions conducted in the Co-Parenting Through Separation & Divorce Program are a private and confidential matter between St. John's Counselling Service and the party and/or parties registered. At no time shall any information be released to any third party save for the issuance of a Certificate of Attendance upon completion of said program.