

CAUSE NO. \_\_\_\_\_

IN THE INTEREST OF:

IN THE DISTRICT COURT

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ JUDICIAL DISTRICT

A CHILD/CHILDREN

\_\_\_\_\_ COUNTY, TEXAS

**ORDER FOR REUNIFICATION THERAPY AND APPOINTMENT OF COUNSELOR**

*(or, as needed, use the following alternate titles:)*

**ORDER FOR FAMILY THERAPY AND APPOINTMENT OF COUNSELOR**

**ORDER FOR CO-PARENTING THERAPY AND APPOINTMENT OF COUNSELOR**

On this day, the Court considered the request for therapy, and the Court finds that there is good cause shown for appointment of a counselor to provide therapy as noted herein, and that such an appointment is in the best interest of the child(ren) in this cause. The Court finds that all parties have knowledge of this order; and each party has the ability to comply with its terms.

IT IS THEREFORE ORDERED that \_\_\_\_\_  
*[Counselor's name & contact information]*

is appointed as family Counselor for the parties and the children in question. Each party is ORDERED to contact the counselor's office within seven business days of the signing of this order, to provide a copy of this order to the Counselor, and provide their completed intake paperwork to the Counselor as directed by the Counselor. In addition, they are each ORDERED to schedule an initial appointment. In the event a mutually-agreeable appointment time cannot be set, the Counselor shall select a date for the initial appointment and each party is ORDERED to cooperate with the Counselor in scheduling and appear as directed by the Counselor.

Each party and attorney is ORDERED to provide copies of all current orders, including the currently court-ordered parenting time schedule, to the Counselor and to provide any updated orders within 3 business days of such orders being signed.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that the counselor may meet with the parties or the child(ren) individually, jointly with siblings, with one or both parents, or with other household or family members as they deem appropriate. Each party shall fully comply with the Counselor's requests in conducting therapy, including, but not limited to, ensuring that the child(ren) are transported to and from scheduled appointments in a timely manner and exercising parental authority to require that the child(ren) attend and cooperate with counseling treatments and interventions. The duration, frequency, location, and persons in attendance for each session with the Counselor shall be left to the discretion of the Counselor, who is specifically authorized to notify the Court if any party is failing to comply with the spirit or letter of this order or other orders of the Court.

IT IS ORDERED that each party shall cause the child(ren) to be transported to any appointment that is scheduled by the Counselor during that party's possession time, even if those sessions do not involve that party, or even if those sessions involve the other party(s). If specifically requested by the Counselor a party may bring the child when it is not that party's possession time, picking the child up and returning the child to their school, daycare, or other location at the time and manner designated by the Counselor.

### **COMMUNICATION**

IT IS ORDERED that the Counselor may communicate and share information with the parties, the parties' attorneys, any parenting facilitator appointed in this case, any of the parties' or the child(ren)'s individual counselors, the court, or any other professional in connection with this litigation as deemed necessary by the Counselor.

IT IS ORDERED the parties shall execute any authorizations as requested by the Counselor to enable the counselor to receive or provide information about the parties or the

children in question. The parties shall notify the Counselor in writing within 24 hours of any changes in their contact information, legal representation, residency, or occupants of their home.

IT IS ORDERED that the Counselor shall have access to the parties' Our Family Wizard accounts. The parties are ORDERED to complete whatever forms are necessary for the Counselor to have such access.

**DURATION OF THERAPY [choose one]**

Therapy shall continue for a minimum of \_\_\_\_\_ months, with reevaluation of the necessity of continued services based on the parties' progress in meeting Goals of Counseling as noted in "Attachment A."

IT IS ORDERED therapy shall continue until the Counselor makes the recommendation that the Goals of Counseling as noted in "Attachment A" have been met, that no further progress is possible at this time, or that appointment of a different Counselor is necessary.

**PAYMENT**

IT IS ORDERED that the expense of the counseling services shall be divided between the parties as follows: \_\_\_\_\_% Petitioner \_\_\_\_\_% Respondent \_\_\_\_\_% Intervenor, with the exception that the Counselor may assess to each party a pro rata share for time expended for reviewing documentation, out-of-session time, and other individual services.

Each party is ORDERED to pay his or her portions of the initial retainer and fees directly to the Counselor within seven days of the Counselor's request for payment, and each party is ORDERED to pay any additional amounts due directly to the Counselor within seven days of the Counselor's request for payment. If a party cancels a therapy session less than 72 hours prior to the scheduled session time or fails to bring the child(ren) to a scheduled appointment during that party's period of possession, that party shall be responsible for 100% of the cancellation fees.

***[WHEN ADDITIONAL PAYMENT PROVISIONS ARE NEEDED  
CONSIDER SELECTING FROM THE FOLLOWING]***

The foregoing payment provisions apply except for the following situations: ***[choose one or more as appropriate; check which apply]***

Joint sessions with multiple adults. If two or more adults participate in a joint session, with or without the child(ren) in question, the costs shall be equally divided between the adults.

Individual adult sessions without the child(ren). If an adult has an individual session with the Counselor, without the child(ren) in question, that adult shall pay 100% of the cost of such sessions.

Review of documents. If a party, the party's legal counsel, or anyone acting on the party's behalf, requests that the Counselor review any documents, that party shall pay 100% of the costs for the time involved in such review. If the request is made jointly, the costs shall be equally divided between the parties.

Communication with the Counselor. If a party, the party's legal counsel, or anyone acting on the party's behalf, requests to communicate with the Counselor, that party shall pay 100% of any costs. If the request is made jointly, the costs shall be equally divided between the parties.

Communication with third parties. If the Counselor communicates with a parenting facilitator, any of the parties' or the child(ren)'s individual counselors, or any other professional in connection with this litigation, the costs shall be equally divided between the parties.

Appearances. If either party requests the Counselor make an appearance in connection with the litigation, including depositions, hearings, trials, settlement conferences, or any other formal meeting,

the costs shall be equally divided between the parties. ***[OR]***

the costs shall be paid by the party who requests the Counselor's appearance.

Written Reports. The cost of any written report that is requested shall be equally divided between the parties.

**COUNSELOR TESTIMONY**

IT IS ORDERED the Counselor shall testify at any hearing in this case at the written request of any attorney of record sent via subpoena, which may be delivered to counselor via fax or e-mail. Unless payment for testimony is already addressed above, the requesting party shall be responsible for the Counselor's customary and usual fees for testifying and said fees shall be paid at least seven days prior to the hearing in the manner specified by the counselor.

Therapy is not a substitute for a Child Custody Evaluation within the terms of Family Code Chapter 107; therefore, the Counselor shall not make recommendations as to the conservatorship of, possession (parenting time schedule) of, or access to the child(ren). The Counselor may make recommendations to the parties regarding changes in conduct that may be helpful to the parties in implementing the Court's orders.

IT IS SO ORDERED.

Signed on this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 20\_\_\_\_.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Judge Presiding

AGREED:

Printed Name:

\_\_\_\_\_

Bar Number:

\_\_\_\_\_

Printed Name:

\_\_\_\_\_

Bar Number:

\_\_\_\_\_

Attorney for Petitioner

Attorney for Respondent

## EXHIBIT A

### GOALS OF COUNSELING

The court has found it in the child(ren)'s best interests to have ongoing contact and meaningful relationships with both parents. The following goals are intended to help the child(ren) have genuine relationships with both parents while minimizing exposure to adult issues.

The primary goals of counseling shall be as follows: [*Indicate goals as appropriate to the case*]

#### PARENT-CHILD/ADULT-CHILD INTERACTION

- Improve the parent-child/adult-child relationship between the child(ren) and
  - Mother  Father  Both parents  Other: \_\_\_\_\_
- Work with each adult and child to identify and separate each child's needs and views from each adult's needs and views
- Foster healthy child adjustment

#### PARENTING FOCUSED ISSUES

- Address emotional and behavioral problems of the adult(s) that impair compliance with, or implementation of, the court-ordered parenting time schedule
- Improve the adults' understanding regarding the negative developmental repercussions for the child(ren) of disrupted or compromised relationships with their parents or other caregivers
- Help each adult to distinguish valid concerns from overly negative, critical, and generalized views relating to other family members
- Improve adult communication regarding their child(ren)'s needs
- Reduce conflict regarding parenting time schedules
- Improve the quality of parenting skills
- Increase adult insight regarding interpersonal issues
- Protecting and removing the child(ren) from adult conflict
- Fostering the child(ren)'s healthy relationship with *both* parents and other family members

**CHILD BEHAVIOR FOCUSED ISSUES**

- Address emotional and behavioral problems of the child(ren) that impair compliance with or implementation of the court-ordered parenting time schedule
- Assist the child(ren) to differentiate themselves from others and assist both the child(ren) and adults in understanding age-appropriate autonomy
- Increase child insight regarding interpersonal issues
- Augment the child(ren)'s coping skills and improve appropriate expressions of the child(ren)'s emotional experiences
- Replace distorted impressions with more realistic perceptions that reflect the child(ren)'s actual experience with other family members

**OTHER ISSUES**

Gain additional healthy coping skills regarding: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Address the following specific issues: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

The parties have been advised that the Court will consider the good faith efforts and parties' devotion to success of therapy as a factor in determining whether to modify the current order, including expanding or restricting parenting time provisions. The parties have been advised that successful therapy often requires that they make changes in their own behavior and parenting to support their child(ren)'s needs. The Counselor may request specific changes by the parties in such areas as setting appropriate limits for child(ren), encouraging child(ren) to express feelings and solve problems appropriately, listening to the child(ren)'s concerns, actively supporting child(ren)'s independent relationships, and shielding the child(ren) from adult conflict. The parties shall make reasonable efforts to cooperate with the Counselor's requests in these areas.