

Bill of Rights for Children of Divorce

- 1) **THE RIGHT** to be treated as an important human being, with unique feelings, ideas and desires and not as a source of argument between parents.
- 2) **THE RIGHT** to a sense of security and belonging derived from being a part of a stable home, school and community environment.
- 3) **THE RIGHT** to flourish in an environment that is free of negative or harmful influences such as drugs, alcohol, crime, disrespect, bigotry, exploitation, neglect and hostile parenting.
- 4) **THE RIGHT** to a continuing relationship with both parents and their extended families, based on a fair and just arrangement that will provide the opportunity to have a meaningful relationship with both parents and the freedom to receive and express love for both.
- 5) **THE RIGHT** to have "listening parents" who work cooperatively in the best interest of all children as well as all members of the family.
- 6) **THE RIGHT** to express love and affection for each parent without having to stifle that love because of fear of disapproval by the other parent.
- 7) **THE RIGHT** to know that their parents' decision to separate or divorce is not their responsibility.
- 8) **THE RIGHT** to continuing care and guidance from both parents, where they can be educated in mind, nourished in spirit, developed in body and surrounded by unconditional love.
- 9) **THE RIGHT** to honest answers to questions about their changing family relationships and about the legal matters affecting them.
- 10) **THE RIGHT** to know and appreciate what is good in each parent without one parent degrading the other.
- 11) **THE RIGHT** to a relaxed, secure relationship with both parents without being placed in a position to manipulate one parent against the other.
- 12) **THE RIGHT** to have parents who will not undermine the child's time with the other parent by suggesting tempting alternatives or by threatening to withhold activities or parenting time as a punishment for the child's wrongdoing.
- 13) **THE RIGHT** to be able to experience regular and consistent parental contact and the right to know the reason for not having regular contact.
- 14) **THE RIGHT** to be a child, to be reasonably insulated from the parent's own inter-personal conflicts yet to be made aware in an age appropriate manner, the problems and solutions to the problems affecting the child.
- 15) **THE RIGHT** to be taught, according to their developing levels, to understand values, to assume responsibility for their actions, and to cope with the consequences of their choices.
- 16) **THE RIGHT** to be able to participate in their own destiny and to be taught about their family's culture and history.
- 17) **THE RIGHT** to be able to contact any parent or any member of either parent's extended family without unreasonable objection or interference from anyone, including parents.
- 18) **THE RIGHT** to be listened to by legal authorities and to have their age appropriate wishes and preferences accurately made known to any court of law.
- 19) **The RIGHT** to be supported and cared for, both financially and emotionally by one's own parents and extended family as the first option before the involvement of any government or other third party.
- 20) **THE RIGHT** to be assisted by competent third parties of the child's choosing whose responsibility it is to protect or advocate for children and to be provided this assistance by the parties without prejudice or bias in favor of, or against, either of the parents.
- 21) **THE RIGHT** to have their disclosures recorded by electronic means should they indicate this to be their wish.



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