



ICFE

INSTITUTE FOR COUPLE &
FAMILY ENHANCEMENT

new ways
FOR families

Step 1: GETTING STARTED

- _____ Self Referral by Agreement of Parties or Court Order issued assigning BOTH parents to participate in the ICFE New Ways for Families Program or BOTH parents ordered to specific Parent-Child Counselor
- _____ Each party reads Parent Instructions (see Parent Instructions)
- _____ Each party selects Individual Counselor (see Counselor List) or contacts the designated New Ways provider.
- _____ Each party prepares a Behavioral Declaration with their attorney,
- _____ Each party obtains Parent Workbook from the ICFE and intake paperwork for individual parent counselor.

Step 2: INDIVIDUAL PARENT COUNSELING

Designated Counselor or a Lawyer can help parents complete this step.

- _____ Each party provides Court Order and Behavioral Declaration to their Individual Counselor and the other parent.
- _____ Each party prepares a Reply Declaration, in response to the other parent's Behavioral Declaration.
- _____ Each party completes six weeks of confidential counseling, using the Parent Workbook.
- _____ After first session, each parent sends out a Coordination Letter to the Parent-Child Counselor
- _____ After sixth session, counselor signs Verification of Completion

Step 3: PARENT-CHILD COUNSELING

Designated Counselor or a Lawyer can help parents complete this step.

Cannot start until BOTH parents finish Step 2; should not start without Coordination Letter, Court Order & Behavioral Declarations sent to Parent-Child Counselor.

- _____ Each party completes three sessions of Parent-Child Counseling using the Parent Workbook, alternating appointments with the other parent. Parents don't meet together, unless they both want third session to be joint. By agreement of the parents, the counselor can add more sessions to accommodate time for several children or other special issues.
- _____ After last session, counselor signs Verification of Completion (form available on website).

Step 4: FAMILY (OR COURT) DECISION-MAKING

To occur after Step 3, except for temporary orders in the meantime if necessary. Professionals should help parents with decision making so they don't revert back to old behaviors, and don't return to court and asking the court to make decisions *for* them instead of working to make their own parenting decisions.

- _____ Attorneys and clients meet to negotiate parenting plan (and any other issues desired);
or
- _____ Parents communicate with each other and Parent-Child Counselor to develop parenting plan;
or
- _____ Attorneys prepare parents to mediate a parenting plan. Attorneys and Mediator can speak with Parent-Child Counselor beforehand to facilitate agreement but should not speak with individual Counselors, who are intended to be strictly confidential;
or
- _____ Attorneys schedule Court Hearing. (In the event of no parenting agreement, parents go to court for judge to decide their fate).