

## Adler Time Sharing Guidelines

Based on the research findings that children experience long-term adverse effects from ongoing parental conflict and that children need frequent contact with each parent to maintain a close relationship with that parent, Robert Adler calls for overall balance in parenting plans. Adler, a well-known specialist in the field of child development and divorce, believes there are as many good schedules for sharing time with children as there are good parents who are able to create and maintain them. There must be a balance between the children's need for stability and predictability of schedule and the need for a resolution of parental conflict. The children's needs for frequent and continuing contact with both parents must be balanced with the parents' schedules. The needs of older children must be balanced with the needs of younger ones.

**I. BIRTH TO 6 MONTHS:** One primary home. The other parent spends two or three hours, two or three times per week with the child; becomes primary caretaker one weekend day per week, or one 24-hour stretch once per week.

**II. 6 TO 18 MONTHS:** One primary home. The other parent spends from two or a full day, two to three times per week with the child, or one 24-hour stretch once per week. Or, two homes, although the child spends significantly more time at one of them and no more than two overnights per week at the other (for mature, adjustable children and cooperative parents).

**III. 18 TO 36 MONTHS:** One primary home. The other parent has the child during the days up to three times per week, on a predictable schedule. Or add one overnight per week. Or, two homes, with the child spending somewhat more time in one than the other--two or three overnights spaced regularly throughout the week.

**IV. 3 TO 5 YEARS:** Two or three nights at one home, spaced throughout the week, the remaining time at the other home. Or, three consecutive days and nights with one parent, four with the other.

**V. 6 TO 12 YEARS:** If parental conflict is low, school-age children can do well with many different parenting plans that allow for frequent and adequate contact with both parents.

A. Friday after school until Sunday evening or Monday morning, every other week, plus one or two overnights during the two-week stay with the other parent.

B. Three days with one parent, four with the other.

C. Alternating weeks with each parent.

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- D. Alternate weekends with each parent, two or three days at each home during the week.
- E. Three and one-half days with each parent; weekends also split.
- F. Two weeks with each parent, with one or two mid-week overnights with the other parent.
- G. Older children may be able to handle even longer stays if frequent telephone contact and some physical contact with the other parent.
- H. Children in one home for school year, with other parent for vacations, supplemented with frequent telephone calls and visits.

**VI. 13 YEARS AND UP:**

- A. Home base with one parent, a mixture of scheduled and spontaneous overnights, shorter visits, and outings with the other parent.
- B. Children spend school year as above. During summer vacation and other long holidays, the situation is reversed.
- C. Work out year-by-year arrangements with older children that respond to teen's needs for continuity in friendships and school.

\*Adapted from Adler, Robert E., PhD. *Sharing the Children: How to Resolve Custody Problems and Get on with Your Life*. Maryland: Adler & Adler, Publishers, Inc., 1988.

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