



HANDS LIFTING HEARTS
INITIATIVES SOCIETY
RESOURCE 12

RAISING THEM TOGETHER.

A co-parenting plan that keeps
children at the centre

For African, Black and Caribbean families,
youth, and caregivers in Alberta

Relationships may change.
Children need safety, stability
and care through the changes.

Family Violence Prevention /
Breaking Silence, Building Safety

Sponsored by the Ministry of Children and Family
Services, Government of Alberta
CONTACT US | admin@handsliftinghearts.ca

Alberta
Government

Children at the centre

Children need safety, stability and freedom from adult conflict. This workbook helps parents plan practical arrangements where communication is safe. Follow any court orders and obtain individual advice where there has been abuse.

Make this your own

Tick boxes and type in the spaces, or print and write by hand. Use a PDF reader that supports forms. You can skip any question, pause, or return later. There are no scores. Save only if it is safe to keep your answers.

Privacy matters. A completed workbook may contain personal information. Use a device and storage location you trust. If someone monitors your device, consider using a safer device or completing the activities without recording answers.

Choose an activity

What my child needs

Our weekly rhythm

How we communicate

When we disagree

Keeping children out of the middle

Support you can choose

Safety first: Co-parenting tools are for parents who can communicate without fear. If there has been violence, threats or control, do not meet alone. Ask a lawyer or family justice worker about safer options such as parallel parenting or supervised exchanges.

What my child needs

Complete this page for one child. Print another copy for each additional child. Use initials if safer.

Child initials and age

What helps them feel safe

School, health or faith needs

Important people to stay connected with (grandparents, aunties, community)

What they have said about the changes

One thought or next step I want to keep

Our weekly rhythm

Use brief notes or initials. Arrangements must follow any court orders and safety plans.

Day	Sleep / location	Drop-off	Pick-up	Activities
Mon				
Tue				
Wed				
Thu				
Fri				
Sat				
Sun				

Holidays and cultural celebrations we will share or alternate

How children will stay in touch with the other parent (calls, video)

How we communicate

Tick the methods you agree to use.

- ☐ A shared calendar
- ☐ A co-parenting app
- ☐ Text only, about the children only
- ☐ Email for longer topics
- ☐ A weekly check-in at a set time

Message template: "Hi. [Child] has [event/need] on [date]. Can you [request] by [time]? Thanks."

Topics we will keep out of children's hearing

One thought or next step I want to keep

When we disagree

Pause. Do not argue at exchanges or in front of the children.

Write down the issue in one sentence.

Raise it at the next check-in, not in the moment.

If it is safe and voluntary, ask a family justice professional about help with disagreement. Where there is fear, coercion or violence, do not arrange informal mediation or a joint meeting; seek individual legal and safety advice.

Our neutral helper

In Alberta, the free Parenting After Separation (PAS) course teaches communication skills and parenting plans. It is required before divorce or Family Law Act applications in the Court of King's Bench, and when a judge directs it. Check the current rules and any exemptions with the court.

One thought or next step I want to keep

Official information is linked on the support page.

Keeping children out of the middle

Choose OK or Not OK.

	OK	Not OK
1. Asking a child to carry messages between parents	☐	☐
2. Telling a child, "It's not your fault"	☐	☐
3. Asking a child what the other parent is doing	☐	☐
4. Letting a child love both parents	☐	☐
5. Speaking badly about the other parent in front of a child	☐	☐

Compare: Rows 2 and 4 protect children. Rows 1, 3 and 5 put children in the middle of adult conflict.

One thought or next step I want to keep

Support you can choose

You do not have to complete this workbook alone. In immediate danger, call 911. Click a service name for its official information.

Family Violence Info Line

Call or text 310-1818. Available 24/7; phone support in 170+ languages.

Hands Lifting Hearts Initiatives Society

admin@handsliftinghearts.ca | handsliftinghearts.ca

Kids Help Phone

Call 1-800-668-6868 or text CONNECT to 686868.

ShelterSafe

Find women's shelters and support services across Canada.

211 Alberta

Call or text 211, or use online chat to find local services.

Plan for your safety

Government of Canada safety planning information.

Parenting After Separation

Course information and current requirements.

One support option I may want to explore

Sources and further reading

[Alberta Parenting After Separation course](#)

Support information checked October 15, 2026. This workbook is not a substitute for personalised safety planning, legal advice or professional support.

Prepared as part of the Hands Lifting Hearts Initiatives Society Family Violence Prevention: Breaking Silence, Building Safety Toolkit. Images are AI-generated and do not depict participants.