

Support for Children

Children may experience adjustment difficulties or more serious psychological distress when parents are separating or even when they have been separated for a period of time. Participation in a child support group or class can be beneficial. In group settings, children can benefit from the experiences and support of other children. The Family Summit Foundation's **Center for Grieving Children** in Ogden is one place where support groups are offered. There are others throughout the state.

Support for Parents

Parents who are able to cooperate in the best interests of their children may wish to retain the services of a mental health professional to provide co-parenting counseling. This counseling can help parents acquire the skills needed to co-parent in ways that help the children make the best possible adjustment. For additional information about this role, go to the **Forensic Forms** page of Dr. King's website and read the **Co-Parenting Counselor Informed Consent and Agreement**.

High Conflict Situations

In cases where there is a high degree of conflict between parents, stress on the children is intensified. They may have difficulty transitioning between homes. While supportive counseling for children may be in order, it is not a solution that should be used alone. A child's distress in these situations is likely not the problem, but a symptom of the problem. When there is high conflict among parents which impacts the children, the solution must include working with both parents.

Agreeing to use a Parent Coordinator, or asking the court to appoint a Parent Coordinator, is advised. For additional information about the Parent Coordinator role, go to the **Forensic Forms** page of Dr. King's website and read the **Parent Coordinator Informed Consent and Agreement**.

Become Aware of Various Roles

Parents are advised to become familiar with the various roles psychologists might play when working with court-involved families, as well as the limitations of those roles. For information, go to the **Forensic Forms** page of Dr. King's website and read the **Overview of Roles and Services** handout.

Dr. King's Services

Dr. King will not serve as a child therapist in high conflict cases. She will serve as a Parent Coordinator, will see the children to provide supportive counseling within this context, and, if necessary, will refer the children for "safe haven" therapy with a different child therapist.