

CRITERIA FOR DECIDING TO CO-SHARED PARENTING IN KINSHIP FAMILIES

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1) Is the Birth Parent emotionally and physically stable enough to co-parent?

- physically accessible/approachable/presentable to their children
- able to keep appointments
- lucid, communicative, and able to be interactive with their child

2) Is the Birth Parent able to accept their roles and guidelines, provided as partners in shared parenting?

- accept the loss and grief associated with new roles
- prioritize the child's needs over their own needs and discomfort
- can avoid making the child feel guilty or feel the need to support or console the birth parent because of their role

3) Is the Birth Parent able to not triangulate the child?

- avoid undermining or competing with the Caregiver's authority
- avoid sabotaging the child's relationship with the Caregiver
- willing to learn how to use their influence to minimize the child's confusion or triangulation

4) Is the Caregiver able to accept a co/shared parenting relationship with the Birth Parent?

- avoid undermining or competing with the Birth Parent
- accept the Birth Parent's role
- willing to learn how to partner with the Birth Parent and not confuse or triangulate the child

5) Are Caregivers and Birth Parents able to be in compliance with any legal guidelines or stipulations?

- visitation order
- restraining or protection orders
- termination of parental rights
- permanency proceeding

6) Are the Caregiver and Birth Parent able to attend joint meetings, when necessary, with the child to provide an emotionally and physically safe space for the child, Caregiver, and Birth Parent?

- compartmentalize pre-existing history and current personal feeling
- make the child feel they are the focus of attention
- willing to learn behaviors, communication, and problem-solving approaches that create safe spaces for the child

7) Is the child emotionally ready for co/shared parenting?

- any indication of trauma prior to, during, or after contacts with birth parents, family, and siblings
- any indications of resistance or hesitations about contact with birth parents, family, and siblings
- any sabotaging of contacts and parenting by the child