

**IN THE COURT OF COMMON PLEAS
FAMILY COURT DIVISION
STARK COUNTY, OHIO**

Case Number _____

**YOU ARE ORDERED TO COMPLETE THE WORKING TOGETHER FOR KIDS
EDUCATIONAL SEMINAR. THERE IS NO COST TO THIS SEMINAR.**

This educational programming is designed to assist never-married parents in learning about their rights and responsibilities as parents, and in improving their communication and parenting skills so that successful co-parenting plans can be created with minimal court intervention. This programming also gives the parties the opportunity to participate in **free** mediation services in an effort to help parents resolve their differences and develop a plan to co-parent their children.

This on-line educational programming is **required** and is most effective when **both** parents complete the seminar. The Working Together for Kids programming consists of an interactive video that can be completed at your convenience, but **MUST be completed prior to your court hearing.**

Please be advised that if the party filing the court action does not complete the programming, then the case will be dismissed. Failure of the non-moving party to complete the Seminar prior to the scheduled hearing date may also result in the imposition of appropriate sanctions including contempt of court proceedings, dismissal of counter-pleadings, additional court hearings and court costs and other court orders which may result in financial consequences to the party not in compliance.

If you would like to attempt to resolve disputed co-parenting issues without the need for litigation, you will be linked to **free mediation** services after completion of the seminar content. **Mediation is voluntary** and many parents find it helpful in communicating their ideas about co-parenting.

THINGS TO KNOW ABOUT MEDIATION

Mediation is a non-adversarial process whereby a neutral professional, trained to listen to parents and assist them in communication, will assist parents in reaching agreements regarding the child(ren) they must co-parent. Mediators are not lawyers.

Mediation is offered at NO COST during the Working Together for Kids Programming. If you continue through the court process and a judge or magistrate orders you to participate in mediation, then there is a fee.

Mediation is NOT a Court Order. However, if you come to an agreement through the Working Together for Kids mediation program, then your agreement will be submitted to your attorney (if you have one) for review, or to the court for approval. You are not bound by your agreement until it is reviewed by the court, made a part of the court orders, and is filed with the clerk of courts.

Mediation will take place at Stark County Family Court. Private rooms and security are provided. (The mediation coordinator may assist the parties with other mediation venues at her discretion.)

Mediation is VOLUNTARY. It is your choice to participate in mediation. Please keep in mind that someone will have to make decisions regarding your child(ren). Mediation allows parents to make decisions that are best for their child(ren). If parties decline mediation, then a hearing will be scheduled and professionals will make decisions for your family.

Issues discussed in mediation include: Who will be the primary residential parent, parenting time schedules including holidays, transportation, telephone contact, access to school, day care and health records, health care for the child(ren) and medical decision making. **Please note that under Ohio law, co-parenting plans must contain a provision addressing child support.**

- If an agreement is reached through mediation and neither parent is represented by counsel, the agreement will be forwarded to a magistrate who will review the agreement with both parents and issue court orders that day. No further court hearing will be required.
- If an agreement is reached through mediation and one or both parents have an attorney, then the mediated agreement will be mailed to attorney(s) for review. Attorneys will then follow up with their clients and submit an agreed entry to the court if the parties wish.
- If no agreement is reached, the parties will be required to return to court for formal court hearings.

Please view the Stark County Family Court's parenting time schedules prior to mediation to better understand how to schedule each parent's parenting time. Go to Starkcountyohio.gov/family-court and view the plans under the forms and links tab.

If you have any questions regarding the mediation process, please contact Rosemary Diamond, Mediation Coordinator at (330)451-7435.

WORKING TOGETHER FOR KIDS EDUCATIONAL SEMINAR

REGISTRATION AND INSTRUCTIONS

1. Please go to: www.scfcqualityparenting.org
2. Create your own user name and password. Your password should only include lower case letters and numbers.
3. Your registration will require you to input your name, email address and case number. You will receive confirmation of your registration. If you do not see a confirmation in your email, check your junk mail or spam folder.
4. Once registered, you will be able to complete the programming content.
5. You may complete the programming all at once, or in segments at your convenience. The program consists of four segments with questions after each segment. Each segment is approximately 20 minutes long. **The online seminar must be completed prior to your court hearing.**
6. Once the programming is completed, you will be directed to a questionnaire page to answer questions about yourself and your children. Complete this form and choose whether or not you wish to engage in mediation. **Remember that mediation is free and voluntary**, and many parents find it helpful in resolving parenting time issues without the need for court intervention.
7. If you would like to mediate, then click on the link for mediation. This page will require you to answer several important questions so that the mediation coordinator can arrange the mediation. ***Remember:** Mediation requires both parents' participation. Therefore, if the other parent on your case chooses not to mediate, then mediation services will not be scheduled.
8. Please note that under Ohio law, co-parenting plans must contain a provision concerning child support. If you elect to mediate, then answer the questions concerning your income and other information about your household so that child support issues can be accurately addressed.
9. If you decide not to mediate, then click on the mediation link and choose "No" and submit the form so that the mediation coordinator knows how you choose to proceed.
10. After you either choose to mediate or decline mediation, you will be directed to an evaluation screen. Please complete this evaluation.
11. Once the programming is completed and the evaluation form is submitted, you will be able to view and print your Certificate of Completion of the Working Together for Kids programming. A copy of the Certificate will be forwarded to the court for filing and emailed to you.
12. Please send an email to Working4Kids@starkcountyohio.gov should you need any technical assistance.