

# Creekside Psychology Ltd.

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## **COLLABORATIVE CHILD SPECIALIST/ PARENT COACH**

*Why are you getting a divorce? Is this my fault? Did I do something wrong? Who are we going to live with? Will you divorce me too? Why can't you just get back together?* Parents often unintentionally get caught up in their own emotions or needs and let that overshadow the needs of their children. When parents separate it is hurtful and confusing to everyone, including children. Kids often feel better and adjust more quickly after talking to a specialist.

### **A Child Specialist...**

- is a mental health professional with specific education and training in the expected behaviours, stages, challenges and tasks of the development of a child.
- represents the voice of the child(ren), advocating for their needs and best interests.
- works as a neutral with both parents and the child(ren) on the *PARENTING* aspects of divorce.
- facilitates discussion between the parents, often in collaboration with the Coaches, to arrive at an effective, developmentally appropriate co-parenting plan.
- may participate in full-team meetings when appropriate.

### **The Child Specialist can help...**

- ❖ identify long-term interests, issues and concerns with respect to parenting
- ❖ provide your child or children with an opportunity to share feelings, voice concerns and ask questions regarding the divorce
- ❖ assess your child(ren)'s needs, feelings and adjustment
- ❖ offer empathic support and understanding to your youngster(s)
- ❖ draw out your child(ren)'s thoughts and feelings about family re-structuring
- ❖ identify counsellors to work with your child (ren) over the longer term, if warranted, around specific emotional or behavioural issues arising through the divorce process

### **You can expect the Child Specialist to ...**

- ✓ Help you separate your interests from the interests of your child(ren)
- ✓ Give you specific feedback about your child's adjustment to the divorce
- ✓ Provide you with information and guidance to help your kids through the divorce
- ✓ Coach each of you about ways of talking with your children regarding separation and divorce and otherwise assist with the complex parenting issues which can arise through this transition
- ✓ Help you identify and practice effective co-parenting skills so as to encourage loving and respectful relationships between your children and each of you as parents

Kids suffer the most damage when conflict between parents is high or when parents put kids in impossible loyalty binds through "pain games". Ensuring that your child makes a healthy adjustment to your divorce means preserving a strong ongoing relationship with both mom **and** dad. Make it your highest priority to love your children more than you detest your former spouse.