

CUSTODY--SOME IMPORTANT FACTORS--CHECKLIST

- age of child
- sex of child
- child's health
- mental and physical maturity of child
- relationship with brothers and sisters
- period lived with parent in present custody
- physical/mental disability requiring special attention
- intelligence of child

- discipline
- physical show of affection
- verbal show of affection
- preparation and types of meals
- washing
- general attention to hygiene needs of child
- interest in child's school work
- assurance of school attendance
- help with school work at home
- special help with school work
- consultations with teachers
- special effort to help at school
- PTA meetings and conferences
- delivery/pickup at school
- type of school in which child is enrolled
- advantages/disadvantages of school

- religious characteristics of parents
- regularity of church and Sunday School attendance
- parent's efforts to get religious education for child
- parent's attendance at church
- parent's participation in church activities

- time spent with child
- sacrifice made for child, i.e., monetary and physical
- playing with child-sports-indoor games
- entertainment for child-movies, etc.
- attention to child's medical needs
- attention to emergencies involving child
- assistance with child's special training-piano, swimming, etc.
- parent's inclination to stay home with child
- time spent away from child
- language in presence of child
- drinking habits in presence of child
- conduct with third parties in presence of child
- public encouragement/criticism of child
- public physical discipline of child
- care in selection of babysitter
- care in selection of friends and neighbors
- social environment of child
- parent's friends and their reputation and conduct around child

- apparent child-parent relationship as seen by third parties
- child's spoken feelings about parent
- child's expression of his/her wishes re: custody
- character of child's friends
- effort by parents to provide good friends
- parent's attitude toward child's friends
- entertaining and keeping child's friends
- parent's courtesy to child's friends

- manners of child
- intelligence of child
- child's relationship with other children
- child's relationship with other adults
- child's physical appearance
- child's educational progress

- physical living conditions of child
- own bedroom
- size of home
- neighborhood
- proximity to school, church, medical facility
- presence of other children in neighborhood
- quality of school
- quality of neighborhood
- distance to school, church, medical facility

- consultation with psychiatrist or psychologist re: custody arrangement
- possibility of shared or joint custody
- possibility of "shifting" custody
- re-evaluation after period of time
- weight to be given child's wishes
- motives of parent seeking custody
- willingness of parents to work together for best interests of child

I. Why does parent want custody?

1. Is the reason wholesome and based upon love and the child's best interests or is it simply a means of striking back at the other parent or probably eliminate support payments or to gain support payments.

II. What does parent have to offer child?

1. Care, supervision, discipline and training.
2. Provisions for comfort, safety, health and general welfare.
3. Protection.

III. Is the character of the custodian's home conducive to the child's best interest and welfare?

1. The nature of those who frequent the home.
2. The quality of the neighbors.
3. Are their children supervised, trained, and disciplined?
4. Proximity to church, school and play areas.

IV. The custodian.

1. His employment record.
2. Is he/she likely to be attentive to duties at home or does he/she spend a great deal of time away from home?
3. What was the nature of his/her contribution to marital split?
4. Does he/she use his/her resources, time and income for the betterment of the home or are they used for his own personal interests?
5. Does he/she genuinely consider the child to be an integral part of the family?
6. Does he/she manifest a deep and abiding love for the child?
7. Is he/she likely to devote the time and resources to provide child recreation, enlightenment and entertainment even though he/she has other things to do which are more interesting to him/her?
8. Would he/she be willing to permit the child to maintain a wholesome relationship with other parent?
9. Would he/she cooperate with other parent in making plans for the

child, disciplining and otherwise considering his general health, welfare, and well-being, discipline and training?

10. Will he/she maintain a wholesome liaison with school, church and advisors in other activities in which the child participates?
11. Will he/she strive to get child involved with wholesome out-of-home activity?
12. Will he/she provide child with means to develop culturally?
13. Will he/she help child in school studies and provide interesting and acceptable study aids for the child?
14. Will he/she recognize the rights of the child to enjoy the other parent and that parent enjoy the child?
15. Will he/she set a good example for the child and otherwise train the child to be obedient and honest as well as respectful of the rights of other children and adults?

V. What alternative type of child care is available when he/she is absent from home?

1. Is that person dependable?
2. Does that person exercise mature judgment?
3. Does that person manifest character and integrity?
4. Does that person set a good example?
5. Is that person related to or a stranger to the child?

VI. What personal qualities to look for in the custodian:

1. How much education has he received?
2. What is nature of his experience which would qualify him to have child's custody?
3. What is his credit experience?
4. Does he have a significant court record, i.e., civil and criminal?
5. Is his personal hygiene acceptable?
6. Is he a gentleman?
7. Does he use drugs and alcohol in excessive amounts?
8. What has been his relationship with his family?
9. What is his relationship with those who work with him and with his neighbors?