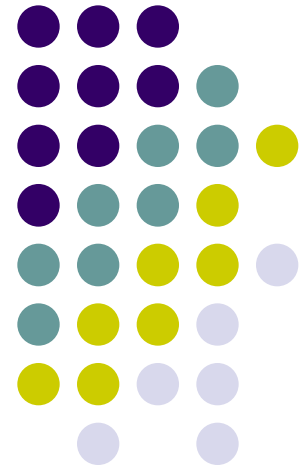


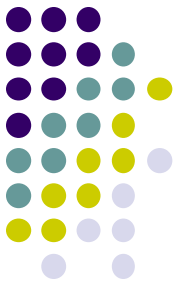
# C.O.P.E. & Beyond

---

Parent orientation  
Modifying the Parenting Plan

7th Circuit Family Court Services  
[www.circuit7.net](http://www.circuit7.net)





# What brings you here?



Clay County Courthouse

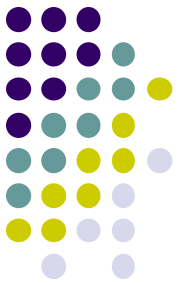
- ☑ Tweak parenting plan?
- ☑ Adjust for passage of time?
- ☑ Change in circumstances?

You have choices for ...

**Voluntary Parenting**  
**Mandated Parenting**

A 4 letter word that  
starts with . . . . .

F E A R

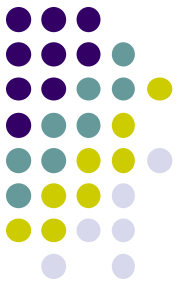


Risk of Loss

Opportunity for Gain



# Agenda: 7 Tips for Non-adversarial parenting



Safe & Secure Children

A “workable” parenting plan

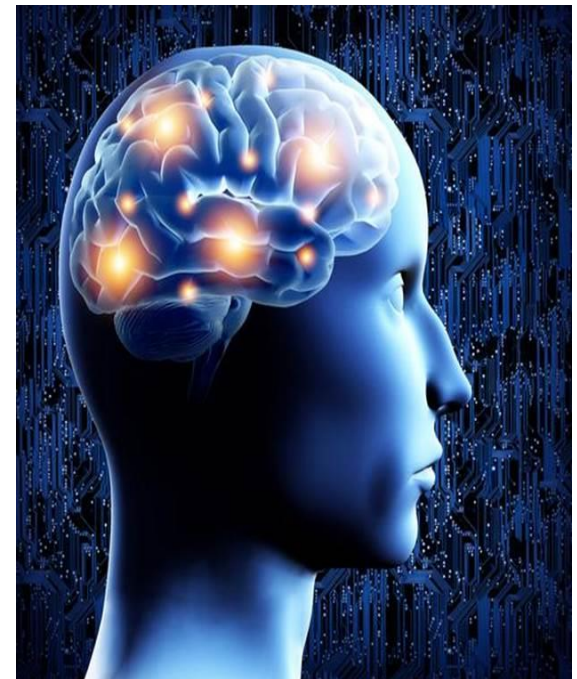
Co-parent, not Partner

Do good business

Stop & think about options

Decide with accurate data

Communicate without fussing



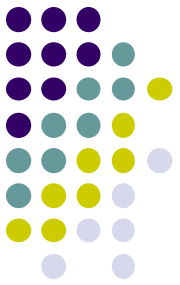


# Review



**Parents have the primary  
role in creating an  
environment that makes  
their children feel  
safe and secure**

# What makes kids anxious (less safe & secure)



Seeing parents argue/hit/hurt each other

“Badmouthing” a parent

Feelings not respected or minimized

Being used as a “bargaining chip”

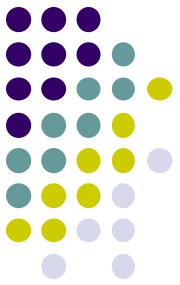
Being used as a messenger

Being asked to “spy” or “tattletale”

Otherwise “stuck in the middle”

# Success tip 1:

## **Keeping Your Kids Safe & Secure**



Day to day contact information

Emergency contact information

Who provides child care

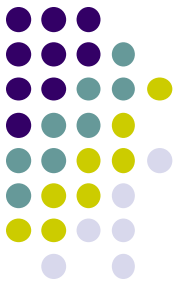
Health information

School information

Social schedule

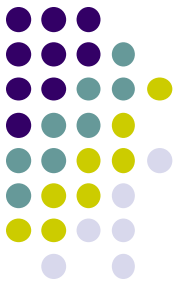
Who can child tell when there is a problem?

**Another 4 letter word: H O P E**  
(hint: a better future for your child ...)



## Success tip 2:

# Have a Workable Plan



- **Cooperative parenting**

highly cooperative, lots of flexibility

- **Coordinated parenting**

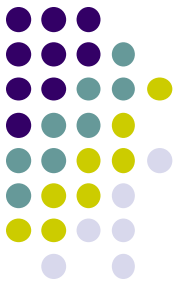
mostly cooperative, some specific ground rules

- **Parallel parenting**

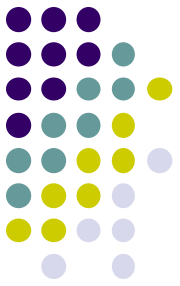
mostly un-cooperative, lots of specific ground rules

# When co-parenting is ...

## Uncooperative or Argumentative or Avoidant



Increase the  
**details** and  
**specifics** in the  
parenting plan



## Success Tip 3:

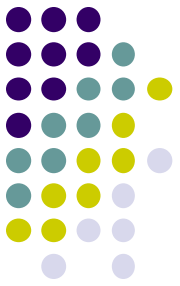
Have separate discussions about:

**parenting** (about the kids)

and

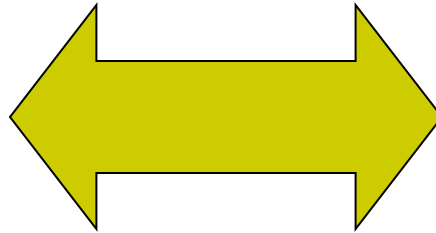
**partner** issues (you & me)

# Success tip 4: Transform the Relationship



**Business**

*low intimacy*

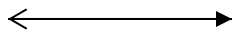


**Negative (hate)**

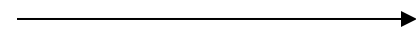
*high intimacy*

**Friendship**

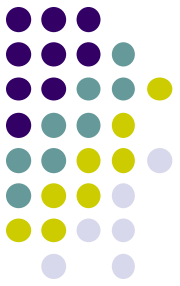
**Positive (love)**



time, effort, money



# Neuroscience: How the Brain Messes with Us



**Emotions** (reactive)

Triggered by Amygdala

**Problem-solving**

In Prefrontal Cortex



**No direct connection – need time to process. Reacting gets us into trouble!**



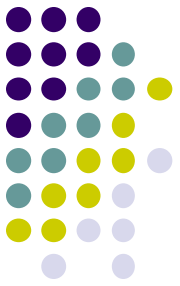
Success tip 5:

**Manage emotional reactions and take time to think about your options**



**Feel-Do-Think**

**Feel-Think-Do**



# Parent Empowerment



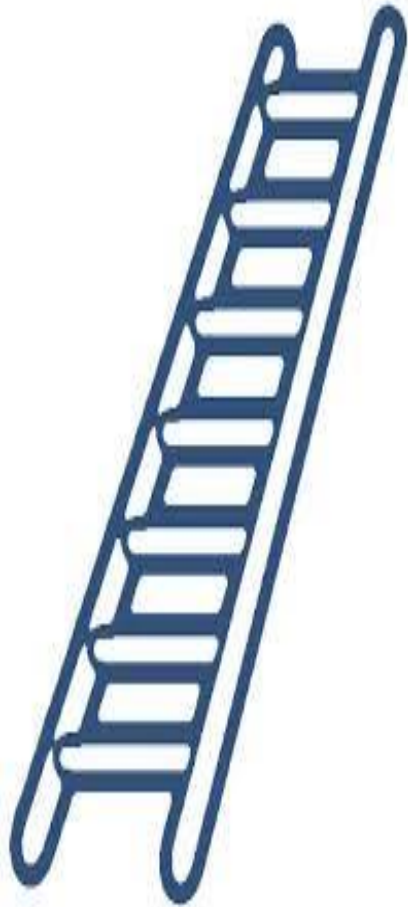
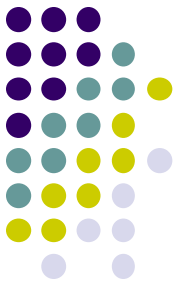
**Reacting** gives up  
control



**Thinking** about choices  
increases control

# Using “The Truth” vs “My Truth”

*Stay low on The Ladder of Inference*



“Beliefs” lead to actions



Assumptions made to fill in gaps



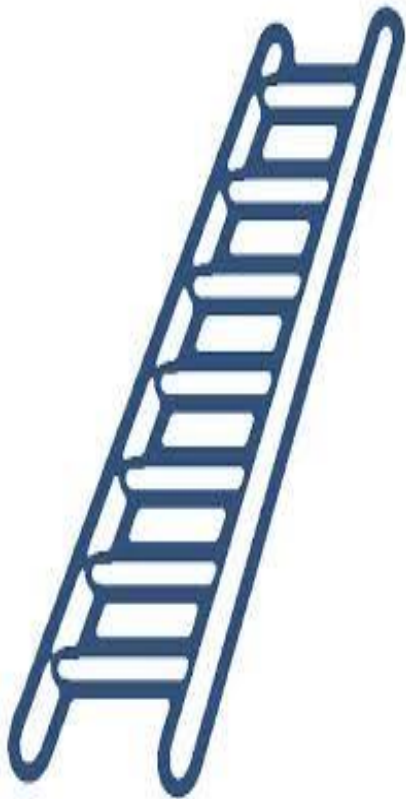
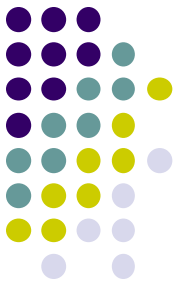
Selection of “significant” data



Observation (just the facts)

## Success Tip 6:

# Reduce bias to increase informed decision-making



Are my actions based on  
accurately assessing  
the data  
or my personal spin?



Success tip 7:

**Some form of communication between parents is necessary for your child's:**



**Safety**

**Security**

**Stress reduction**



# **Treat communication as essential to doing good business**



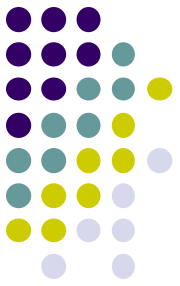
**Respectful**

**Responsive**

**Listen & learn**

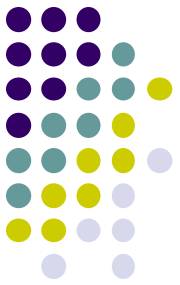
**Balance (not all negative)**

**Avoid defensiveness**



# Managing communications

- **B**rief (maximum 3 sentences)
- **I**nformative (just the facts)
- **F**riendly (business-like, respectful)
- **F**irm (end mushrooming conflict)



# Handling Communications

## The Request:

*“The office picnic is this Saturday from 12-6. Can I take Junior.?”*

## The Response:

*“How can you even ask for ANOTHER #%\$! schedule change . Stop butting in on my time with Junior. He doesn’t need to be exposed to your sordid office romances.”*

## B.I.F.F.

*“The picnic is for families. I thought Junior would enjoy meeting the other children. Since it is your weekend, I will respect that and withdraw my request.”*

# Tips for successful Co-Parenting



- ☑ Keep kids safe & secure
- ☑ Have a “workable” parenting plan
- ☑ *Separate “parent” & “partner” issues*
- ☑ Move to a business relationship
- ☑ Stop & think about your options
- ☑ Base decisions on accurate data
- ☑ Have some form of effective communication