



CoParenter  
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CoParenter is a dispute resolution tool for parents. Helps resolve conflict by putting kids at the centre instead of in the middle. It allows collaborative parenting and manages shared information, and has been shown to solve issues in 20 minutes.

Diana Lowe is the co-lead of an Alberta initiative about reimagining the family justice system based on brain science and wellness. It focuses on healing, supports, and providing people with skills and tools.

- In the area of DV, they have done work with IMPACT
- Responding to domestic violence is important, but the hope is prevention
- CoParenter can do both – allows supports for families who are already in DV situations, but can also be preventive in approach
- CoParenter has been collaborating and will soon be able to roll the platform out for free for a 60 day period

Jonathan: CoParenter was started as a child well-being platform that aims to eliminate high-conflict divorce from adverse child experiences

- It was originally designed to help families deescalate conflict and make relationships better by resolving disputes and minimizing issues without bringing them to court
- Access to an on-demand mediator/coach
- The pandemic has meant CoParenter is being adopted by private practitioners and those in the field
- Helping parents learn new behaviours and enhance the relationship so they can do what's best for their kids

## **The CoParenter App**

### **Overview**

- Notifications on home screen: messages from co-parent
  - Clients have asked for the option to start new conversations about a specific item



- Conversations are just like text messaging, and all are recorded and cannot be modified – time stamped
- Sometimes court orders may mandate that this platform is the only form of communication – an uneditable record and ability to monitor
  - Brings a level of accountability, especially in high-conflict cases – DV victims may have higher levels of safety
- Language filter: notifies the sender if a message sounds hostile. Can be words or phrases

### **Kids' Info Bank**

- Common, especially in the US, for one party to hold certain information hostage, e.g. Dr.'s information.
- All held in one place and shared automatically between both Co-Parents

### **On-Demand Mediation**

- One-on-one coaching
- Objective is to empower parents to resolve their own parenting issues
- Conflict is “issue-driven”: request for the party to strip it down to a single issue (may be complex)
  - When people don't have to see the body language of the other person, there is greater ease to mediate and confer when you're safe in your own home
  - Coaching sessions involve one party

### **Parenting Time Scheduling Tool**

- The professional can create a parenting time schedule
- Includes basic templates, or the mediator can build one from scratch
  - Option to cycle schedules/modify based on situation
- Co-parents can agree/disagree, and if they disagree more tweaks can be made. Makes the schedule part of the agreement, and added to their calendar
- Ability to assist people with their real-time needs and being able to visualize it
- Importance of being able to look at what co-parents *need*

### **Requests**

- About specific actions, e.g. to sign the child up for sports
- Includes specific details like scheduling and the financial aspect

### **Team Member Account**

- Can invite others to use the app via text message, e.g. lawyers, case workers



### Check-In

- Can help in situations where one co-parent says the other's always late, e.g.
- Allows evidence in court, e.g. if someone actually were where they said they were
- Only collects evidence when the check-in button is pressed

### Journal

- Keeps record of feelings, but also just a record of what's going on
- Allows the evidence to be fleshed out – more real-time

### Experience From a DV Perspective

- Nothing within the app would exacerbate a DV situation – the question always asked in development, how would the app work for/against a DV victim?
- The app can be used for the community
- Honor County – an order will go to the offender after victim is presented with the benefits
  - Monitoring is done by a probation officer, who has access to check-in activity and can communicate with co-parents
  - From a victim's perspective, enhances the feeling of safety
  - Can help to educate offenders on how their behavior is affecting the situation
- Solo Mode: can communicate with one parent via text message even if they don't use the app
- Lots of thought put in from a safety perspective
- How is Check-In used in DV cases?
  - E.g. offender must be in a certain location for supervised visits and must check in to verify that
- Can have a mediator who is trained in domestic violence. Keep it safe for both sides

### Q&A

Can you see the exact time when the messages are read? I know it has two check marks but does it give the time?

- Only shows how the message was sent. The check mark that it *was* read but not when

Can officers view communication?

- Mediators can view client communication, for example monitoring the communication
- The app is browser-based, but can be used on mobile devices as well
- It's agreed upon between the two parties that this is the only mode of communication – they can do behaviour modification in real time



- <https://rcdvcpc.org/rcdv-news.html>

Do we know if this is endorsed by the Alberta Courts or if it can be mandated by the Alberta Courts?

- The tools like this available have been known by the courts for a while
- Some judges may order families to use a communication tool, and may recommend CoParenter as the tool to use
- We don't know how this will be mandated in courts – CoParenter is working to keep family issues out of courts
  - We may not see this only directed by courts – hoping those who work on front lines (legal aid, police, etc.) may direct people toward the app

Can you use multiple languages on this app?

- Currently English-only; it is designed to be localizable but is not localized currently
- In some communities, the app might be best used with coaches who are from that community
  - E.g. how/can it work in Indigenous communities?

Cost?

- Families can purchase for \$15/person/month
- Another option could be for organizations to purchase a broad license and then provide mediators and allow as many families on as available
- They aim to keep people on the app after the 60 free days – looking more toward the organizational model

How is live chat being used in a DV situation?

- When mediators have access to communication, that usually is oriented toward the perpetrator
- Victims can have real-time support through CoParenter