

## CO-PARENTING FOR RESILIENCE: *Helping Parents Help Their Children*

For over 20 years, OSU Extension Educators have offered Co-Parenting classes across Oklahoma. The current Co-Parenting for Resilience class:

- ∴ Is a four hour program that provides parents with the insights, strategies, and skills necessary to help them reduce conflict, keep their children out of the middle of their divorce, and promote resilience in their children.
- ∴ Is based on the latest empirical research on divorce, remarriage, parenting, interpersonal communication, conflict reduction, mediation, custody arrangements, domestic violence, and child development.
- ∴ Employs proven theories of change, moving participants beyond gains in knowledge to promote actual change in behavior.
- ∴ Helps parents examine their decision to divorce and, when appropriate, promotes reconciliation instead of divorce.
- ∴ Helps parents recognize when co-parenting practices may be inappropriate or supervised visits are advised, and acquaints them with community-based resources for their continued development.
- ∴ Addresses domestic violence and other reasons co-parenting may not be indicated and provides single parents with practical instruction to help their children overcome the trauma they experienced.
- ∴ Provides monthly follow-up materials for 12-months after the class.

## EVALUATION STUDIES

- ∴ Participants are asked to fill out standardized pre and post surveys and are compared to a control group to ensure program effectiveness.
- ∴ Studies conducted by OSU researchers found that three months after having taken the class parents showed statistically significant:
  - Increases in positive parenting practices;
  - Increases in working cooperatively with their co-parents;
  - Decreases in conflict with their co-parent; and
  - Reductions in behaviors that alienate children from their other parent.

## TRAINING AND FIDELITY CHECKS

- ∴ Cooperative Extension educators hold at least a bachelor's degree and in many cases a master's in Family and Consumer Sciences or related field and are trained extensively on the program. All facilitators of the Co-Parenting for Resilience program must:
  - Go through an initial eight-hour intensive training;
  - Take additional ongoing core-competency training; and
  - Observe an experienced educator deliver the class three times before conducting their own class.
- ∴ Ongoing Fidelity Checks are performed to ensure adherence to the primary tenets of the program and to inform further training and program development.

## WHAT IS COOPERATIVE EXTENSION?

Cooperative Extension is America's largest network of university educators dedicated to helping people improve their lives. A network of trained Oklahoma Cooperative Extension Educators provide a presence in all 77 counties.

The County Educators are supported by College of Human Sciences faculty from Oklahoma State University who specialize in parenting, marriage and families, mental health, health and nutrition, housing, and other related areas.

Parents and caregivers attending the Co-Parenting for Resilience program are also introduced to numerous other research-based programs designed to help them and their children, such as: parenting, personal finance, 4-H clubs, stepfamily formation, and more.

As the outreach arm of OSU, the Oklahoma Cooperative Extension Service provides high-quality research-based programs at an affordable cost.





## WHAT OTHERS ARE SAYING ABOUT Co-Parenting for Resilience

### Participants in the Co-Parenting class said:

*"All divorcing parents with children should take this class – I didn't realize how many things I do could hurt my children. Why aren't all parents required to take it?"*

*"I now see how often I was placing my children in the middle. I'm not doing that anymore! I just didn't want to hear my co-parent's voice, but now I will take time to communicate with her."*

*"I feel this class has given me a better understanding of what I can do to help my children cope."*

*"I learned better ways to communicate with my co-parent and how to keep the children out of the middle of things."*

*"I wish I would've had this class before I got married. Maybe I wouldn't be here."*

*"Proper co-parenting in a domestic matter is an important step in the healing process for all those involved especially the innocent children."*

– The Honorable Elizabeth Brown

*"Co-parenting gives children a voice in their future."*

– The Honorable Timothy Olsen

*"Divorce is like the flu: it makes you feel bad all over. Co-Parenting, when used appropriately, is like a medicine that helps control the symptoms and gets you and your children back on their feet more quickly."*

– Dr. Ronald B. Cox Jr., Associate Professor in Family Science, OSU



[coparenting.okstate.edu](http://coparenting.okstate.edu)  
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## KEY INFORMATION FOR JUDGES & LAWYERS

### OSU'S CO-PARENTING FOR RESILIENCE CLASS:

- ❖ Fulfills the requirements of the law; In fact, researchers from OSU were key consultants in developing the law.
- ❖ Was developed by experts in the field;
- ❖ Is continuously evaluated and updated to ensure the highest level of quality based on the latest research findings;
- ❖ Has been shown scientifically to be effective;
- ❖ Is offered in two formats: onsite and online.
- ❖ Is well positioned to be the preferred program for divorcing parents in the state of Oklahoma.

OSU research faculty use data from the co-parenting class to generate new knowledge about divorcing parents and their children to advance the field and enhance our ability to serve divorcing parents and their children.



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Oklahoma Cooperative Extension Service  
Family and Consumer Sciences  
College of Human Sciences

