

**IN THE SUPREME COURT OF TEXAS**

Misc. Docket No. 94-9070

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**APPROVAL OF LOCAL RULE OF THE 219TH DISTRICT COURT OF  
COLLIN COUNTY**

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**ORDERED:**

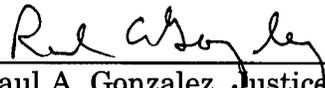
Pursuant to Rule 3a of the Texas Rules of Civil Procedure, the Supreme Court approves the following local rule, which has been submitted to this Court:

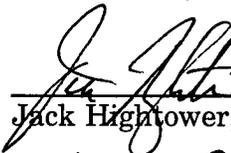
Local Rule of the 219th District Court of Collin County regarding Children's Interest Seminars, dated April 20, 1994.

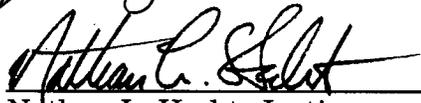
The approval of this rule is temporary, pending further orders of the Court.

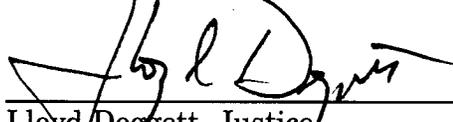
SIGNED AND ENTERED this 22nd day of August, 1994.

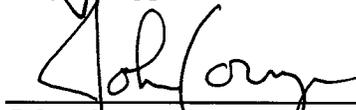
  
Thomas R. Phillips, Chief Justice

  
Raul A. Gonzalez, Justice

  
Jack Hightower, Justice

  
Nathan L. Hecht, Justice

  
Lloyd Doggett, Justice

  
John Cornyn, Justice

  
Bob Gammage, Justice

  
Craig Enoch, Justice

  
Rose Spector, Justice

IN THE 219TH JUDICIAL DISTRICT COURT  
COLLIN COUNTY, STATE OF TEXAS

Local Rule Re: Children's Interest Seminar

This local rule is promulgated, subject to the approval of the Supreme Court of Texas.

Section 1. This rule applies to all parties in all suits affecting the parent-child relationship filed in the 219th Judicial District Court on or after the 45th day after this rule is approved by the Supreme Court of Texas.

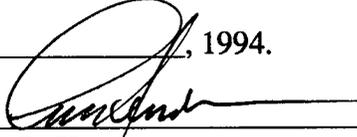
Section 2. The 219th Judicial District Court may require such parties to successfully complete a seminar that addresses the issues confronting children that are the subject of divorce, custody, and child support litigation. Exhibit "A" attached hereto and incorporated herein for all purposes describes the seminar. Each party is responsible for payment of the appropriate fee.

Section 3. The seminar shall be successfully completed within 60 days of the service of the original petition upon the respondent, or if service is waived, then within 60 days of the waiver of citation.

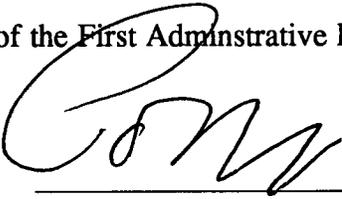
Section 4. Upon a party's failure to successfully complete the seminar pursuant to this rule, the Court may take appropriate action, including contempt, striking of any pleading, or any of the sanctions listed in Rule 215 of the Texas Rules of Civil Procedure.

Section 5. For good cause shown, the Court may waive the requirement of completion of the seminar.

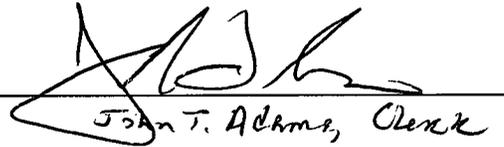
Signed this 20 day of April, 1994.

  
Curt B. Henderson  
219th Judicial District Court

Approved by the Presiding Judge of the First Administrative Region on the 25 day of April, 1994.

  
Judge Pat McDowell  
Presiding Judge, First Administrative Judicial Region

Approved by the Supreme Court of Texas on the 22<sup>nd</sup> day of August, 1994.

  
John T. Adams, Clerk

*Exhibit "A"*

**Children's Interest Seminar**

The seminar shall focus fostering emotional health for children during periods of stress brought about by divorce and conflict between divorced parents.

The seminar administrator shall be designated by the Court. The Court has currently designated Practical Parent Education and CASA of Collin County to be the seminar administrators.

The course content shall generally consist of the following:

- (1) the developmental stages of childhood,
- (2) the needs of children at different ages,
- (3) stress indicators in children,
- (4) age appropriate expectations of children,
- (5) divorce as a growth stage
- (6) the grief process,
- (7) reducing stress for children going through a divorce
- (8) the changing parental and marital roles,
- (9) visitation recommendations to enhance the child's relationship with both parent's,
- (10) financial obligation's of child rearing,
- (11) conflict management and dispute resolution.

Each seminar shall be a minimum of two hours and a maximum of four hours. The seminar may include the showing of videos, such as "*Don't Forget The Children*" and "*Children In The Middle*".

The seminar shall be presented at such times and places as scheduled and announced by the seminar administrator.

A fee of not more than \$30.00, unless waived by the Court, may be charged by the seminar administrator to be used to cover costs.

Each person completing the seminar and paying the appropriate fee shall receive a certificate to file with the Court.

The Court may require a certified peace officer to be in attendance at each seminar to provide security.



**Seminar Dates: Jan. 27, 1994 & Jan. 28, 1994**  
**Feb. 24, 1994 & Feb. 25, 1994**  
**Mar. 25, 1994 & Mar. 31, 1994**

## EVALUATION RESULTS CHILDREN'S INTEREST SEMINAR

In order to continue the development of the Children's Interest Seminars and to make them as effective as possible, we need your help in answering the following questions. All responses are confidential. Thank you for your assistance.

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Please rate each response on a scale of 1 - 4

Extremely Helpful	Very Helpful	Somewhat Helpful	Not Helpful
4	3	2	1
<b>Totals: 564</b>	<b>431</b>	<b>92</b>	<b>5</b>

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How much has the seminar helped you in:

• understanding the effects of divorce on children?			
4	3	2	1
<b>Totals: 41</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>
• recognizing the importance of taking care of yourself?			
4	3	2	1
<b>Totals: 42</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>0</b>
• recognizing the importance of a cooperative parenting partnership?			
4	3	2	1
<b>Totals: 55</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>
• recognizing parental behaviors which are damaging to children?			
4	3	2	1
<b>Totals: 62</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>0</b>
• feeling more confident in talking with your child about the divorce?			
4	3	2	1
<b>Totals: 32</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>0</b>
• understanding how your child may react or is reacting to the divorce?			
4	3	2	1
<b>Totals: 40</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>0</b>

• learning how to respond to your child's reactions and feelings?	4	3	2	1
<b>Totals: 37</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>0</b>	
• recognizing at-risk behaviors in children?	4	3	2	1
<b>Totals: 44</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>0</b>	
• recognizing how important a nurturing relationship with each parent is to your child?	4	3	2	1
<b>Totals: 39</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	
• knowing how to develop a sense of security and stability for your child during the divorce transition?	4	3	2	1
<b>Totals: 33</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>1</b>	
• providing practical skills for handling visitations?	4	3	2	1
<b>Totals: 31</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>1</b>	
• becoming more sensitive to your child's needs?	4	3	2	1
<b>Totals: 39</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>0</b>	
• feeling more confident about supporting your child through the divorce transition?	4	3	2	1
<b>Totals: 38</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>0</b>	
• becoming more aware of community resources?	4	3	2	1
<b>Totals: 31</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>0</b>	

What was most helpful about the seminar?

**Learning about parenting behaviors that are damaging to children**

**Learning to stop and think about what you are doing to your child**

**Knowing that my ex-spouse might decide to work with me instead of against me in my children's best interests**

**The professional, but caring way the seminar was presented**

**Understanding the stages of grief**

**Understanding my child's feelings and needs**

**Understanding a child's view of divorce**

**Learning how to cope with your child's needs**

**Putting me in touch with what lies in front of me**

Learning about my children's behavior and how I can help them  
Pointed me in a direction to hopefully reach my teenage sons  
Understanding how divorce can be destructive to your kids  
Understanding my children's anger  
The video  
The parent guide to take home to refer to  
Understanding the risks of putting children in the middle  
Co-parenting for children's needs  
Telling my children about the divorce  
Recognizing children's behaviors within normal range  
Understanding the tremendous responsibility of divorcing

What was least helpful about the seminar?

Most did not respond to this question

Too long

Having wife in same room and feeling skeptical of what you say

Everything was helpful

Well rounded

Everything was perfect

What improvements would make the seminar more effective?

More comfortable chairs

More videos

Going further into explaining divorce to children

How to get ex-spouse to cooperate

It was all very helpful

Right on track

Provide a class with a Christian base

Are there needs which were not met in the seminar?

Add another seminar on how to get along with your ex-spouse

Need a seminar on legal aspects for parents

How to help yourself

Parent relationships

More "do this" rather than this is how you "should do it."

Would you recommend the seminar to others?

100% responded Yes

If you were court ordered, are you resentful about being required to attend?

One responded Yes but commented that seminar was "excellent".

This is the best thing any court could do.

I'm grateful I came

Wish it had been available before my divorce

No, I knew they (courts) were thinking about my children

Only that it was two years too late!

Absolutely not!

I wish this would have been offered five years ago.

At first, but not after attendance.

No, definitely not! It helps!

This has been very beneficial

No - anything to better off me and the children

Not at all. Enjoyed it. Very educational. Thanks!

Here voluntarily and glad I came. Thank you.

This is the second time I took it (voluntarily). There was so much to learn that I wanted to hear it all again.

# Practical Parent Education

*Making a Difference in the Lives of Today's Families*

1517 Avenue H  
Plano, TX 75074  
(214) 519-8720

April 15, 1994

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Mike Catron, Vice-President  
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Anita Wormald

## Executive Director

Linda Johnston

Ms. Diana Corbin  
Administrator  
Texas Bar Foundation  
P.O. Box 12487  
Austin, TX 78711

Dear Ms. Corbin:

We are excited to be able to share with you our progress with the Children's Interest Seminar since its implementation in January of this year. After hundreds of hours, a very comprehensive facilitator manual has been developed. We believe that it is well researched and after testing it with six groups of parents we feel confident that it is an effective tool for addressing the needs of divorcing families. We will continue to make minor adjustments to it in the upcoming months before making it available to other counties.

An accompanying parent handbook has also been developed which provides parents with not only an oversight of the seminar but with valuable resources within our county. Every parent attending the seminar receives one of these handbooks.

With the Bar's assistance we have been able to set up a unique collection of books and videos for both parents and children which deal with the issues of divorce. Parents may check these materials out at the seminar or may borrow them at any other time from our Family Resource Library.

To date, a total of 101 parents have participated in the seminars. Most have been court ordered, although quite a few have attended voluntarily. The fees are \$30 per person, but we have waived 15 thus far. Participant responses have been overwhelmingly positive. Most are grateful to the courts for the opportunity and certainly see it as a valuable learning experience for helping their children cope with divorce. Enclosed you will find a summary of the evaluations for our first quarter.

Seminars are currently being offered twice monthly. As we continue to refine them, we still remain committed to our goal of making the program available by fall to other counties in Texas. We are currently evaluating how we might most effectively offer training sessions to help interested counties begin to implement their own programs.

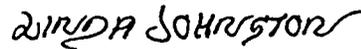
Acceptance of the program concept by parents, attorneys, judges, law enforcement agencies, and the community in general has been surprisingly positive. CASA of Collin County is working collaboratively to assure that court ordered parents do attend. We want to do more in the area of public awareness and look forward to speaking in the near future with local bar associations, civic groups, etc.

Page Two of Letter to Ms. Diana Corbin from Linda Johnston

Enclosed you will find copies of the facilitator manual, the parent handbook, a financial update, evaluation summary, publicity, and other information which I hope you will share with the Board. We truly believe that we have the potential to make a significant impact on divorcing families. Without the financial support of the Texas Bar Foundation, none of this would be possible. We hope you share in our sense of excitement and commitment.

We will continue to keep you apprised of our progress. If you should have questions or suggestions in the meantime, please feel free to contact us.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "LINDA JOHNSTON".

Linda Johnston  
Executive Director

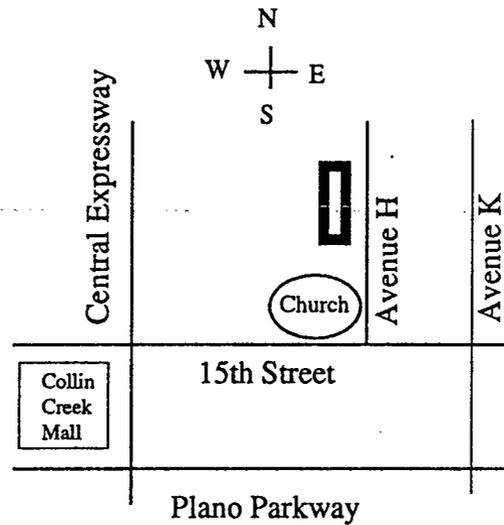
Enclosures

## Grant Expenses Through March 31, 1994

	Texas Bar Foundation	Other	Total
<b>INCOME:</b>			
• Texas Bar Foundation Funding	\$9,500.00		\$9,500.00
• Other (Specify)			
Plano Bar Association		\$ 925.00	925.00
Practical Parent Education		\$5,600.00	\$5,600.00
CASA		\$ 600.00	\$ 600.00
<b>Total Income:</b>	<u>\$9,500.00</u>	<u>\$7,125.00</u>	<u>\$16,625.00</u>
<b>EXPENDITURES:</b>			
• <b>Personnel</b>			
Clerical		\$ 800.00	\$ 800.00
Curriculum Development		\$1,500.00	\$1,500.00
Staff Training (Specify)			
Trng. Seminar/Atlanta		\$ 250.00	\$ 250.00
Stipends (Specify)			
Seminar Presenters		\$1,200.00	\$1,200.00
Security	\$ 446.25		\$ 446.25
<b>Total Personnel</b>	<u>\$ 446.25</u>	<u>\$3,750.00</u>	<u>\$4,196.25</u>
• <b>Transportation</b>			
Total Transportation		\$ 675.00	\$ 675.00
• <b>Supplies (Specify)</b>			
Fax			
Paper	\$ 16.15		\$ 16.15
Postage			
Copying			
Materials (Parent Handbooks)	\$ 367.50		\$ 367.50
Seminar Videos	\$ 435.00		\$ 435.00
<b>Total Supplies</b>	<u>\$ 818.65</u>		<u>\$ 818.65</u>
• <b>Equipment (Specify)</b>			
Overhead Projector	\$ 245.99		\$ 245.99
TV/VCR	\$ 668.18		\$ 668.18
Check-Out Books & Videos	\$ 400.00	\$1,000.00	\$1,400.00
Handout Materials		\$ 500.00	\$ 500.00
<b>Total Equipment</b>	<u>\$1,314.17</u>	<u>\$1,500.00</u>	<u>\$2,814.17</u>
• <b>Publicity and Advertising</b>			
Printing (Brochures)		\$ 200.00	\$ 200.00
Postage			
<b>Total Publicity &amp; Advertising</b>			<u>\$ 200.00</u>
<b>Total Expenditures</b>	<u>\$2,579.07</u>	<u>\$6,125.00</u>	<u>\$ 8,704.07</u>

To Register  
or for Additional Information,  
Call  
**Practical Parent Education**  
**519-8720**

**Seminar Location**  
**Practical Parent Education**  
**1517 Avenue H**  
**Plano, TX 75074**



**Children's Interest Seminar**  
**Practical Parent Education**  
**1517 Avenue H**  
**Plano, TX 75074**

# Children's Interest Seminar

*Nurturing Children through  
the Transitions of Divorce*

**As a reminder for your records:**

**Date and Time of  
Selected Seminar**

**Date** \_\_\_\_\_

**Time** \_\_\_\_\_

This project was made possible  
in part by a grant from the  
**Texas Bar Foundation.**

# Children's Interest Seminar

Children's Interest Seminars are designed to help parents gain insight into the needs of their children during the transitions of divorce. The program is a collaborative effort of the 219th Judicial District Court, the Plano Bar Association, and Practical Parent Education. It was developed out of a concern for the potentially devastating effects divorce creates for children.

Divorce is a painful and confusing experience for all children. Research indicates that the manner in which parents handle divorce can have a direct effect on children's adjustments.

Even the most caring parents will find it difficult to focus on their children's needs during such a traumatic time. Most parents will not have the skills necessary to help their children with the resulting change and loss.

Children's Interest Seminars will help put parents in touch with their children's needs and provide them with the knowledge and skills to safely nurture their children through this process.

The four hour seminar is an educational model. It does not deal with personal or legal issues; nor is it a counseling experience. The overwhelming majority of parents who have participated in this type of seminar feel that it is a very supportive and worthwhile experience.

**Who May Attend?** Any interested parent or professional is invited to attend. Parents involved in a divorce, motion to modify, or other suits involving the parent/child relationship may be required by the district court to attend.

**When and Where are the Seminars Held?** The seminars will be held in the educational classroom of Practical Parent Education, 1517 Avenue H, Plano, (See map on reverse side) on the last Wednesday and Thursday of each month with the exception of August, November and December.

**Who Facilitates the Seminars?** Individuals with masters level degrees in counseling, social work, or parent education will lead the sessions. Generally a male and female will co-facilitate.

**What is the Cost?** Fees are \$30.00 per person and are payable by check or money order ahead of time. Fees may be waived by the courts for individuals unable to pay. A fee form is attached.

**How Do I Register?** You may call Practical Parent Education to register at 519-8720 between the hours of 9:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. Monday-Friday

**What Information Will Be Covered?** The seminar will focus on issues such as:

- Understanding the effects of divorce on children
- Gaining insight into children's perceptions of divorce
- Talking to children about divorce
- How to avoid placing children in the middle of parents' issues
- Maintaining a meaningful relationship with your children

**Will I Receive a Certificate of Completion?**

All participants who complete the four hour seminar will receive a certificate of completion. Seminars will begin and end on time. No late arrivals will be allowed and participants must remain in class for the entire four hours. **No exceptions.**

## Registration Fee Children's Interest Seminar

Name \_\_\_\_\_

(Please print.)

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Work Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Court Referral  Yes  No If yes, name of official \_\_\_\_\_

Selected Seminar Date \_\_\_\_\_

Method of Payment  Check  Money Order

(Make payable to Practical Parent Education)

**\*Court ordered participants must attend the complete four hour seminar to receive certificate of completion. Please arrive ten minutes early.**