

**Family Services (Part 5): Parenting Education**

Hi. I am here to talk with you about parenting education. If your case involves child custody or visitation, the court might direct you to attend a parenting education seminar. The goal of the seminar is not to teach you how to be a parent. The goal is to help you minimize the effects of separation and divorce on your children. We get it. Co-parenting with someone you don't live with can be hard. These seminars are designed to help you and your child get through this transition.

Let's talk a bit about the parenting education seminar.

**CHAPTER HEADING: PARENTING EDUCATION SEMINAR**

It will cover topics such as the emotional impact of divorce. How, for example, does separation or divorce affect children of different ages? Or, how might it change your relationship with your child? The seminar will cover things you can do to be effective co-parents and ways to navigate discipline and transitions between homes. It will give you strategies for communicating effectively with your child and helping them understand and adjust to changes in the family. The course will also cover domestic and child abuse and provide resources if needed.

Another important part of the seminar: how to develop a parenting plan.

**CHAPTER HEADING: PARENTING PLAN**

This is a written roadmap for when your child spends time with you and the other party or parties and how major decisions will be made. Parenting plans provide consistency and predictability for you and your child. They can also help prevent future conflict. To learn more, watch the Maryland Judiciary's video series on parenting plans at [mdcourts.gov/parentingplans](http://mdcourts.gov/parentingplans)

So where do you take the seminar?

**CHAPTER HEADING: WHERE DO YOU TAKE THIS SEMINAR?**

It depends on your court. Some courts offer in-person classes. Others will refer you to online programs. There is a fee for seminars that is typically divided between you and the other party or parties. Based on your income, you may be eligible for a fee waiver. Consult with your court's Family Support Services Coordinator for details.

Thanks for watching. We hope this video has been helpful.