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Stemming the Tide of Misinformation: International Consensus on Shared Parenting and Overnighting

White Paper

This white paper describes the purpose and background of a two-year project to stem the tide of misinformation that was generating confusion about where the scientific community stood on shared parenting for preschool children. Four decades of research were reviewed, analyzed, and vetted by incorporating feedback from an international group of experts in the fields of attachment, early child development, parent-child relations, and divorce. **Social Science and Parenting Plans for Young Children: A Consensus Report** was published in the American Psychological Association's journal, *Psychology, Public Policy, and Law*, with the endorsement of 110 highly accomplished researchers and practitioners, several who contributed seminal studies cited in the report.

STEMMING THE TIDE OF MISINFORMATION summarizes the Warshak consensus report and its conclusions and recommendations. This white paper describes gaps between the scientific evidence and opinions derived from two studies that are often cited to support recommendations of blanket restrictions that limit or discourage shared parenting and young children's overnights with one parent when their parents live apart. The paper refutes assertions that children cannot benefit from shared parenting and overnighting arrangements if their parents disagree about custody.

The paper provides the conclusions and recommendations of the consensus report and describes how the article has helped decision makers. After the Warshak consensus report was published, two new studies lent additional weight to the report's conclusions. The white paper discusses the new studies and describes reactions to the consensus report. The paper concludes by explaining the advantages of having the consensus report reviewed and endorsed by prominent international authorities.

ABSTRACT

Warshak, with the review and endorsement of 110 researchers and practitioners, analyzed more than four decades of research and issued a peer-reviewed consensus report on parenting plans for young children. As intended, the report stemmed a tide of misinformation that was threatening to resurrect myths about child development and enshrine them in professional practice and family law. The list of endorsers and their professional accomplishments reflect the widespread acceptance of the consensus report's findings that favor shared parenting and overnighting for young children under normal circumstances. Two years after its publication, the conclusions and recommendations of the Warshak consensus report remain supported by science.

To read **[Stemming the Tide of Misinformation \(revised 01/2018\)](#)** (no charge) *click here* .
