



## Two Homes, One Childhood: A Parenting Plan to Last a Lifetime

By Robert E. Emery Ph.D.



**Two Homes, One Childhood: A Parenting Plan to Last a Lifetime** By Robert E. Emery Ph.D.

**A paradigm-shifting model of parenting children in two homes from an internationally recognized expert.**

A researcher, therapist, and mediator, Robert Emery, Ph.D., details a new approach to sharing custody with children in two homes. Huge numbers of children are affected by separation, divorce, cohabitation breakups, and childbearing outside of marriage. These children have two homes. But their parents have only one chance to protect their childhood. Building on his 2004 book *The Truth About Children and Divorce* and a strong evidence base, including his own research, Emery explains that a parenting plan that lasts a lifetime is one that grows and changes along with children's—and families'—developing needs. Parents can and should work together to renegotiate schedules to best meet the changing needs of children from infancy through young adult life. Divided into chapters that address the specific needs of children as they grow up, Emery:

- Introduces his Hierarchy of Children's Needs in Divorce
- Provides specific advice for successful parenting, starting with infancy and reaching into emerging adulthood
  - Advocates for joint custody but notes that children do not count minutes and neither should parents
  - Highlights that there is only one “side” for parents to take in divorce: the children's side

Himself the father of five children, one from his first marriage, Emery brings a rare combination of personal and professional insight and guidance for every parent raising a child in two homes.

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**Editorial Review**

Review

“Emery’s assessment of divorce and its effects on children is spot-on. Parents faced with divorce would do well to bring Emery’s book to the table at the next mediation session.”

—*Kirkus Reviews*

“*Two Homes, One Childhood* provides a crucial road map for understanding children’s needs at every stage of development with guidelines for flexible parenting plans that change with the child’s needs over time. [A] brilliant, child-centered approach...a must-read for every separating parent and the professionals who work with them.”

—Joanne Pedro-Carroll, Ph. D., author of *Putting Children First*, clinical psychologist, and child specialist

“An invaluable guide and resource for parents working together to raise their children after divorce or separation. [Emery’s] advice and insight are sensible, sympathetic, and scientifically sound.”

—Elizabeth Scott, Harold R. Medina Professor of Law at Columbia Law School

“I recommend this book to all those who proclaim that their primary concern is the well-being of children of separation and divorce. Dr. Emery provides practical guidance to parents, lawyers, judges, mediators—just call him Coach!”

—Hon. Ann Sundt (ret.)

“Emery is a rare find: an acclaimed divorce scientist and mediator who knows the realities of separated parenting. His advice is educative, reassuring, and motivating, and will go a long way to enabling parents to help their children thrive between two homes.”

—Jennifer E. McIntosh, professor of psychology and founder [ChildrenBeyondDispute.com](http://ChildrenBeyondDispute.com)

“Robert Emery keeps his eyes and yours, glued on children, while guiding parents through an evidence-based approach to raising children in two homes. I highly recommend this book to parents and their co-parents.”

—E. Mark Cummings, Ph. D., Professor and Notre Dame Endowed Chair in Psychology, Director, Family Studies Center

“[Emery] offers a hopeful message aimed at the parental heart and intent on keeping children’s needs front and center.”

—Marsha Kline Pruett, Ph. D., M.S.L., Maconda Brown O’Connor Professor, Director, Clinical Research Institute, Smith College School for Social Work

“As a juvenile and family court judge. I have admired Robert Emery’s work for decades. This book is particularly relevant to separated parents. It is written clearly, and is practical, I plan on encouraging judicial colleagues to read it.”

—Judge Leonard Edwards (ret.)

About the Author

**Robert E. Emery, Ph.D.**, is a professor of psychology and the director of the Center for Children, Families, and the Law at the University of Virginia, where he has spent his entire academic career (beginning in 1981).

He received his B.A. from Brown University in 1974 and his Ph.D. from Stony Brook University in 1982. Dr. Emery's research focuses on family relationships and children's mental health, including parental conflict, divorce, divorce mediation, child custody, and genetically informed studies of all these issues, as well as associated legal and policy issues. Emery has authored more than 150 scientific publications and several books on divorce. In addition to his research, teaching, and administrative responsibilities, Dr. Emery maintains a practice as a clinical psychologist, divorce mediator, and parenting coordinator. He is the father of five children.

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How to share custody of infants is a hot topic. Too hot. Ever since I completed my research, I have gotten volumes of e-mails. When I speak about very young children at professional meetings, which is often, I attract large crowds. Most of the judges, lawyers, and psychologists in the audience are more than eager for guidance. They are desperate.

Sure, some of these professionals think they know what is best—based on their preconceived beliefs. Not too long ago, I gave a long workshop to a group of about thirty judges. I reviewed all kinds of issues and evidence for them. After the talk, one judge lingered. He came up to me and said, "You're an entertaining speaker." I smiled at the compliment. Then he said, "But I'm a fifty-fifty guy."

This is who might be deciding your case—a "fifty-fifty guy" or maybe an "every other weekend guy" or a "no overnights guy."

But your family isn't a case, is it? We're talking about your baby.

As I discuss in Chapter 4, expert opinion about the best schedule for babies is all over the map. Some suggest that parents should swap their babies across households. Frequently. There are experts who argue that babies benefit from swapping homes, and cribs, every day or two.

At the other extreme are experts who think it is fine for a very young child to have a daytime visit, or two, with the "other" parent every week, or two. Many experts on this side of the fence tell parents that infants and toddlers should sleep in the same bed every night, and have the same caregiver available to comfort them, if needed. Some want this pattern to continue until a child reaches age four or so.

And then there are the courts. Judges all over America, all over the world, are faced with warring parents, dueling experts, and the politics of "mothers' rights" versus "fathers' rights." In the face of controversy and uncertainty, some judges are ordering parents to raise their babies according to untenable, seemingly abusive schedules. Breastfeeding can be used as a reason to deny more than a few hours of visitation with the father—or condemned as a manipulative tactic of "visitation interference." Some judges allow parents to see their babies only for a few brief hours, every other weekend. Other judges order parents to transport their babies across long distances so they can swap their infant on a schedule where a week or more passes before the child sees the other parent again.

What does such a grand experiment in "fairness" do to an infant?

Over the course of decades of practice and research on child custody disputes, I have refused a great many invitations to appear in court as an expert witness. My reasoning was (and remains) simple. I want parents to work together, make their own coparenting decisions, and stay out of court.

After more than thirty years of work as a psychologist, family therapist, mediator, and researcher, I broke my

rule. A few years ago, I was compelled by outrage to testify in court for the first and only time in my long career. My testimony, in essence, suggested that a judge had erred in awarding week on/week off custody to the parents of a one-year-old baby. The parents lived a six-hour drive apart from each other. They were so angry and uncooperative that when they met on the highway to swap their baby, they refused to share information—or blankets, cuddly toys, or even medicine.

To the judge, the plan seemed fair to everyone. It may have been, except to the most important one: the baby.

## **Users Review**

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Playing with family in a park, coming to see the coastal world or hanging out with friends is thing that usually you will have done when you have spare time, and then why you don't try thing that really opposite from that. One particular activity that make you not experience tired but still relaxing, trilling like on roller coaster you are ride on and with addition details. Even you love Two Homes, One Childhood: A Parenting Plan to Last a Lifetime, you are able to enjoy both. It is very good combination right, you still want to miss it? What kind of hangout type is it? Oh can occur its mind hangout fellas. What? Still don't get it, oh come on its called reading friends.

#### **Patricia Jones:**

Beside that Two Homes, One Childhood: A Parenting Plan to Last a Lifetime in your phone, it can give you a way to get more close to the new knowledge or information. The information and the knowledge you will got here is fresh from the oven so don't possibly be worry if you feel like an older people live in narrow commune. It is good thing to have Two Homes, One Childhood: A Parenting Plan to Last a Lifetime because this book offers to your account readable information. Do you sometimes have book but you do not get what it's exactly about. Oh come on, that would not happen if you have this with your hand. The Enjoyable arrangement here cannot be questionable, such as treasuring beautiful island. Techniques you still want to miss this? Find this book along with read it from now!

#### **Shirley Wales:**

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#### **Catherine Gates:**

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