

## Red Flag Reference List

*When to pause, seek support, or change your approach*

*This reference list is a clinical tool for practitioners – not legal advice. When any of these indicators are present, the co-parenting approach and level of professional support may need to change.*

### Consider Moving to a Structured or Parallel Parenting Model

- Direct communication consistently escalates or results in personal attacks
- One party uses communication as a vehicle for control or intimidation
- The child shows signs of distress specifically around transitions or parental contact
- Each exchange becomes an opportunity for conflict rather than child-focused coordination
- Either party refuses to disengage from non-child-related grievances in communication
- The child is being used as a messenger for adult communication
- Agreed co-parenting norms are repeatedly and deliberately disregarded

### Consider Referring for Specialized Support

- Either parent is showing signs of significant mental health distress affecting parenting
- The child is displaying elevated anxiety, withdrawal, or behavioural difficulties around transitions
- Co-parenting conflict is unresolvable through practitioner-supported intervention alone
- A parent reports feeling coerced, monitored, or threatened by the other party
- Substance use or dependency is affecting parenting capacity
- Extended family or new partners are significantly escalating conflict

### Consider Consulting a Family Mediator or Legal Professional

*The following are prompts to raise with clients – not legal advice.*

- The custody or parenting schedule needs significant revision and agreement cannot be reached
- One party is not complying with existing parenting plan agreements
- Relocation (domestic or international) is being considered by either party
- Significant changes in a child's circumstances require formal agreement
- Either party has sought or received independent legal advice

### **Consider Safety Planning Immediately**

*If any of the following are present, co-parenting models that require direct contact may be inappropriate. Refer to appropriate specialist services.*

- A history of coercive control or domestic violence is disclosed or observed
- Either party is subject to a legal protection or restraining order
- There are concerns about a child's immediate physical or emotional safety
- A child discloses harm or fear related to one household