



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS: DIVORCE & CUSTODY SERVICES

Does your practice testify in court?

Yes. The therapists at ATG do testify in court. However, it is important to note that our practice should not be involved simply to testify. Therapy services should not be retained with the sole intention of having the therapist testify in court or to support a parent's legal case. Testifying in court, particularly regarding minor clients, means that the private details of the therapy will become public.

Will you be able to provide possession and access recommendations?

No. In the state of Texas, therapists are legally prohibited from making possession and access recommendations. While we may make recommendations related to therapeutic contact, these recommendations are not possession and access recommendations and should not be perceived as such.

My case is very complex, are you sure an LPC Associate is qualified to help us?

Yes! An LPC Associate is a licensed mental health professional, has passed a national board exam, and holds at least a master's degree. LPC Associates, while they are newer professionals, are not students. General experience as a therapist does not automatically translate to competency when working with divorce or custody issues.

All therapists at ATG have received training regarding divorce, high-conflict divorce, and custody issues. Dr. Allen supervises and provides ongoing training to all therapists at ATG.

What is Dr. Allen's supervisory role of LPC Associates in the practice?

Dr. Allen is legally and ethically responsible for all ATG staff and she takes this very seriously. Dr. Allen oversees all cases, conducts routine case reviews, reviews and signs all therapy notes, and provides clinical directives when appropriate. Dr. Allen provides updates to other professionals involved in client cases on an as-needed basis. She is able to provide comprehensive updates based on her high level of involvement with the treating provider assigned to a case.

Can you provide Guardian Ad Litem, Parent Coordinator, or Parent Facilitator services?

No.

What is the process to begin therapy with ATG?

For minors, both parents need to complete paperwork via our client portal (regardless of which parent has decision making rights). Both parents will attend a parent intake session separately. Parents are required to

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attend a virtual 90-minute Parent Educational session with our parenting coach where they will learn about the impacts of high conflict divorce on children, appropriate and inappropriate topics to discuss with their child, strategies for redirecting their child, navigating difficult parent-child conversations, supporting the parent-child relationship with both parents, and successful strategies for communication with the other parent. A certificate of completion will be provided.

How do you support children through the divorce process?

Therapists work with children to help them understand their own thoughts, feelings, and behaviors. We also provide education regarding the Children’s Bill of Rights, appropriate parent and child roles, and the importance of a loving relationship with both parents. Children in our practice are able to explore possible feelings of blame, shame, or guilt regarding divorce and changes within the family. Please note that the therapist will not solely focus on the divorce or custody situation with your child. The goal is to process this big family change, but also help the child move out of a sole focus on that and into exploration of other important areas of their lives.

Our aim is to support the entire family through this difficult process.

What is your approach to reunification therapy?

Our practice takes a treatment team approach to reunification therapy, which may include a combination of therapy and parent coaching. The child will meet with the reunification therapist by themselves for a period of time to establish a therapeutic relationship before beginning to explore hopes, fears, and expectations about the process and relationship with their parent. The estranged parent will meet with a therapist or parenting coach for supportive work in preparation for successfully joining sessions with the child. The non-estranged parent may be asked to participate if appropriate but does not generally join sessions with the child and other parent. An anticipated timeline of the reunification process cannot be provided as this is determined on a case-by-case basis.

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