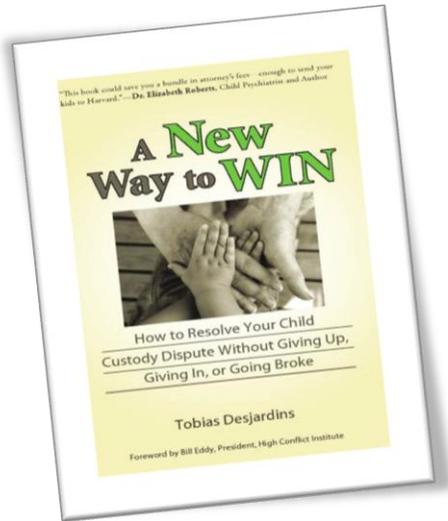


From **A New Way to Win: How to Resolve Your Child Dispute Without Giving Up, Giving in or Going Broke**, by Tobias Desjardins.
More info: www.ANewWaytoWin.com.



What is a Child Custody Evaluation?

A child custody evaluation is a process focused on determining what custody arrangement would be in the best interests of the children.

Conducted by a neutral and specially trained mental health professional, the evaluation typically involves interviews with the parents, children and others who may be involved with the children (e.g. teachers, doctors, day care providers, extended family members).

The overall goal is to help parents and the judge resolve the custody issues in dispute by providing them with objective information and concrete recommendations for how the parents would best share custody.

Custody evaluations tend to be used when the other options for resolving the dispute (such as private mediation, or working with a collaborative team) were unsuccessful or when there are serious mental health, safety, or relocation issues at the heart of the dispute.

The process usually takes several weeks to complete. The evaluator may work in the private sector or be a member of a family court staff team. The cost for an evaluation varies – but typically ranges from \$1000-10,000+ depending on the complexity of the issues.

At the conclusion of the process the evaluator will submit a set of written recommendations regarding custody and visitation to the judge and the attorneys. Prior to having the judge issue orders as a result of the evaluation, parents may opt to negotiate their own settlement using the evaluation report as a basis for their discussions.

For more on this subject go to your local court's website and look for information on Child Custody Evaluations, contact an attorney, or a child custody evaluator.