

Jane and Joan Children's Expenses Role Play

Jane and Joan were never married. They have two adopted children: April, age 6 and Sam, age 4. They have a court order for equal custody and parenting time from two years ago. Child support was reserved (not ordered at that time).

When the children were younger, they didn't have any problems simply paying for expenses related to their own respective parenting time. Now that the children are getting older, they have come to mediation to discuss ways that they could divide responsibility for miscellaneous expenses related to April and Sam, including:

- School supplies and activities
- Winter coats and boots
- Music lessons
- Daycare
- What to do about possibly enrolling April in hockey and how to divide those expenses

Please work with Jane and Joan to get their estimates of the cost of these various things (they will need to make this information up as they go). However, they do already have some information about daycare and before/after school care. April is in school but goes to before and after school care that costs \$25/week when school is in session. It is unclear what daycare costs will be for April during non-school days because the rates change once children in April's daycare reach school age. They pay \$150 per week for Sam's daycare. Sam has nine more months of daycare and then Sam will have the same before and after school cost as April (\$25 per child per week).

Jane earns a salary of \$40,000 per year plus an annual bonus that is usually between \$2,000-\$3,000 per year but there wasn't one this year. Joan earns \$15/hr and works irregular hours but averages about 36 hours a week. Full time work is not available to Joan through this employment.

Joan earns less income than Jane but doesn't want their children to miss out on opportunities just because they live in two homes, so financial decisions and responsibility for paying for things related to the children are creating more and more disagreements between Jane and Joan.

Jane and Joan would like to work out a plan for financial expenses related to the kids going forward out without having a judge decide some cookie cutter solution that won't fit their family.