

The Paper Trail Checklist

One page to start writing it down calmly, clearly and consistently.

1 SET UP ONCE (ABOUT 20 MINUTES)

- ☐ **Pick ONE place** for notes: an app, a notebook or a document.
- ☐ Make 4 folders: **Messages, Exchanges, Expenses, School & Medical.**
- ☐ Back up messages somewhere **other than your phone.**
- ☐ Write today's date at the top of your first page.

2 EVERY ENTRY NEEDS

- ☐ **Date + time** (time zone if you travel)
- ☐ **Who** was there
- ☐ **What happened**, in order, with exact words when it matters
- ☐ **What you did next**
- ☐ **Follow-up** needed, or the impact on your child

Tue 10/6, 5:10 PM. School pickup. Scheduled 5:00, other parent arrived 6:10, no message. 5:20 I texted for an ETA. Follow-up: confirm Friday's time in writing.

3 WHAT TO KEEP TRACK OF

- ☐ **Exchanges:** scheduled time vs. actual time, who, where
- ☐ **Messages:** the full thread with dates showing, not just the worst line
- ☐ **Schedule changes:** confirm any agreement in writing
- ☐ **Missed or shortened visits and calls**
- ☐ **Shared expenses:** receipts saved the same day
- ☐ **School and medical:** appointments, notes, who attended
- ☐ **Your child's wellbeing:** sleep, school, transitions, as you observe them (never by questioning your child)
- ☐ **The easy days too**, so there's a baseline

4 KEEP IT CALM

- ☐ **Facts first.** Feelings go in a separate line or diary.
- ☐ **No labels.** Describe what happened, not what kind of person someone is.
- ☐ **Same day**, even if it's only 2 lines.
- ☐ Reread: **could a stranger follow it?**

5 WEEKLY 10-MINUTE REVIEW

- ☐ Fill in any gaps from the week.
- ☐ Back up this week's messages and photos.
- ☐ Add one line per event to a **date-order timeline.**
- ☐ Note anything to raise with your attorney.

Want the full step-by-step?

The 7-Day Guide, plus the Documentation Workbook and Tracker.

guide.coparentevidence.com/7-day-guide