

CHECKLIST FOR GAL INVESTIGATION

1. Determine role and duties based on appointment order from the court.

2. GAL Investigation - - Interviewing the child.

- (a) Explain confidentiality.
- (b) Use age appropriate language.
- (c) Be aware of age and maturity.
- (d) Ascertain personality type.
- (e) Discover likes and dislikes.
- (f) Discover problems or concerns.
- (g) Look at relationship with siblings.
- (h) Look at relationship with extended family.
- (i) Ask about school activities, performance.
- (j) Discover child's preference of living arrangements if possible.
- (k) Encourage child to ask questions.

2. Interviewing the parents.

- (a) Background.
- (b) Age.
- (c) Health.
- (d) Employment (duties and schedules; arrangements for child care).
- (e) Living situation (identify all residents in the home).
- (f) Emotional state.
- (g) Attitude toward other parent.

- (h) Attitude toward other parent's family.
 - (i) Attitude toward schoolwork.
 - (j) Attitude toward extra curricular activities.
 - (k) Approaches to discipline.
 - (l) Hopes and plans for the child.
3. Interview other important persons.
- (a) Child's best friend.
 - (b) Babysitters/child care workers.
 - (c) Close relatives.
 - (d) Teachers.
 - (e) Coaches, advisors or instructors.
 - (f) Religious leaders.
 - (g) Counselors.
 - (h) Physicians.
 - (i) Therapists.
 - (j) DHS case workers
4. Observe the child interacting with parents and others.
5. Visit the child's home (Request a formal home study by a qualified case worker if needed).
6. Collect evidence.
7. Request assistance if necessary from court personnel, DHS, counselor, etc.
8. Document findings thoroughly.
9. Interact with parents' attorneys as required.

10. Avoid partisanship with either parent.
11. Prepare a written report and recommendations.
12. Make report available to both parents.
13. Be available to testify.
14. Determine best interests
- 15, Identify and disclose to the court and parties the child's wishes