

Dear Members of the Law and Justice Interim Committee,

Thank you for investigating ways to decide divorce and parenting time issues and unclog our court system. During the next meeting I will share some free or low cost ways that some jurisdictions decrease conflict between divorcing parents.

I thought it useful for you to hear about a no cost method developed in the midwest, required by some district courts.

[UpToParents.org](http://UpToParents.org) is a free, confidential and interactive website for divorced and divorcing parents. It demonstrates the effect of parental conflict on children and encourages them to choose principles for raising their children together in separate households.

The Hon. Brent E. Dickson, Justice of the Indiana Supreme Court writes, "[UpToParents.org](http://UpToParents.org) (for divorce cases) and [ProudToParent.org](http://ProudToParent.org) (for paternity cases) are powerful tools to inform and inspire parents about the advantages of child-focused co-parenting...the sites are uniquely effective means of conveying the advantages of more peaceful and cooperative co-parenting."

When parents begin looking at these web pages, they are offered links to sites that offer support for reconciling their relationship. [WhileWeHeal.org](http://WhileWeHeal.org) and [NoDivorceToday.org](http://NoDivorceToday.org).

These sites personalize interaction by using the children's names and circumstances. There are 15 instances of feedback specifically tailored to each parent's actual responses. There are recordings of children, "We don't care where we spend Christmas, we just want the fighting to stop," and other video and interactive content.

These sites may not be appropriate in cases with domestic violence, so there needs to be a mechanism for these families to opt out, should a court require parents to visit these websites.

Before the committee meets, I recommend that you have a look at [UpToParents.org](http://UpToParents.org). Maneuver your way around, and enter fictitious names of children, to get a feel for how parents would experience the sites. I am interested in hearing your reactions.

Sincerely,

*Linda Gryczan*  
President,  
Montana Mediation Association

[lindag@mediationworks.tv](mailto:lindag@mediationworks.tv)  
406 431-3635