

Preface

In the latter part of 2015, I received a message from Steven Peskind that encouraged me to submit a book proposal to the American Bar Association Family Law Section. At the time, I was not thinking about writing another book, and it had not been long since my previous one had been published. However, it helped that I had seen very high-level work by Steven, including as a trial attorney (in part, conducting an excellent and very challenging cross-examination of an expert, namely me) and having written a superb law review article and book. Therefore, I was open to his encouragement to submit a proposal.

We communicated back and forth about a number of possible book topics. Eventually we arrived at the topic of parenting plans, about which I thought I could make a substantive contribution to benefit children of divorce.

My main concern in writing such a book was that the main readers would be legal professionals. Other than having been a second author on a law review article, my earlier articles and book had been aimed primarily at psychologists and other mental health professionals. It helped that parenting plan and best-interest-of-the-child legal criteria overlap a good deal with results of psychosocial research about what influences children of divorce; therefore, a considerable amount of the book contents are relevant both for legal and mental health professionals.

I wish to thank attorney Lynne Ustach, co-chair of the ABA Family Law Section Publications Board, for her time and effort reviewing the book manuscript, and especially for her excellent feedback that contributed to substantial improvements in it. Thanks also go to the Hon. Edward Newman for his review of the manuscript. I have a great deal of appreciation for Jeff Salyards, executive editor of the American Bar Association Publishing, who has guided me through the course of many months of work on this book.

I am grateful for the assistance and input of a number of other individuals. My administrative assistant, Marzena Powala, carried out her usual, consistently high level of work helping me in a number of phases as I was writing. I appreciate the responses and input of a number of colleagues and friends, including those on the Best Interest listserv. Periodically, I placed inquiries on the listserv when I was having difficulty finding quality published resources about one of the content areas covered. In particular, I wish to thank Bud Dale for providing multiple leads about parenting plan statutes that served as excellent cross checks for the online searches that Marzena and I conducted.

Most importantly, I am grateful for the support and encouragement of my family, including my wife and children, as well as my deceased parents. Among many other wonderful qualities, my parents were great models of how to work and interact with others, and their lessons live on.