

# MEMORANDUM ON ORDERED COUNSELLING FOR PARENTS

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## Dear Parents

In the event of separation or divorce in a family with children like yours, all members of the family will inevitably experience immediate and in many cases painful changes that are not easy to cope with.

Therefore the District Court (Kreisgericht) and/or the Family Judge in charge have decided to take the legal option of ordering counselling. The purpose of this counselling is to understand the problems that have occurred in your family due to the fact of living apart, and to seek and bring about an understanding between all those involved, parents and children. This should help you deal with this difficult situation for the best of the children and yourself.

This counselling will be provided by qualified staff of the Child and Adolescent Psychiatric Services (Kinder- und Jugendpsychiatrischer Dienst) of St. Gallen or of the Institute for Forensic Psychological Assessment (Institut für Forensisch-Psychologische Begutachtung) or of the Child and Youth Welfare Services (Kinder- und Jugendhilfe) of St. Gallen. Counselling will take about two or three months before the next appointment with the court. It may also be extended if a satisfactory completion has not yet quite been attained but is very likely to be reached after all.

In case it were not possible to come to an amicable solution to the problem during the counselling phase, the court will then either decide immediately after the scheduled hearing held in the presence of the counsellor, or as the case may be, initiate further evaluations.

**Please note that participation in the sessions held by the qualified staff of the above-mentioned counselling services is compulsory for both parents as well as for the children.**

An invitation to the first session will be sent to you shortly. The specialist's task is to counsel you and all other parties involved and to support you in finding an amicable solution to the problem. This specialist counsellor has no authority to decide, but will submit a report to the court after completion of the counselling.

The costs of this ordered counselling will be accounted according to expenditure. They will be invoiced to the parents unless free-of-charge proceedings are granted.

Many thanks in advance for your constructive cooperation.