

**Needham Pediatrics, P.C.**

**Policy Regarding Children Whose Parents are Separated or Divorced**

**November 23, 2013**

Many of our patients are children whose parents are either separated or divorced. Our primary concern for these children is to promote their health and well-being. In such situations, we are happy to work with either or both parents to make sure the child's healthcare needs are met.

When a minor child visits our office accompanied by either parent, we will assume that parent has full legal custody and authority to make medical decisions for the child, unless we are instructed otherwise, in writing, by a legal authority.

We need to depend on the child's parents to communicate clearly with each other about the child's health status and healthcare plans. Our general approach is to communicate our medical assessments and recommendations with the parent who accompanies the child to the office, or with the parent who contacts us by telephone or electronic communication.

We cannot take the responsibility of contacting each parent separately every time we see the child in the office or communicate with either of the parents. We are, however, happy to receive inquiries about the child's health from either parent at any time.

We cannot mediate financial disputes between the two parents. When children visit our office, we hold the accompanying parent or guardian responsible for any payments required. Any disputes about reimbursement for medical expenses need to be settled between the parents privately.