

# Policy Regarding Children Whose Parents are Separated or Divorced



Commonwealth Pediatrics  
Boston Children's  
Primary Care Alliance

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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 both parents to make sure the child's health care needs are met.

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

It is essential that we can 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 brings the child to the office, or with the parent who contacts us by telephone or electronic communication. It is not feasible for us to take the responsibility of contacting each parent separately every time we see the child in the office. We are, however, happy to receive inquiries about the child's health from either parent at any time via phone or the MyChart portal. Each parent can sign up for a MyChart account as well.

We cannot mediate financial disputes between the two parents.

When children visit our office, we hold the accompanying parent or guardian responsible at the time of the visit for any payments required, regardless of divorce decree. Any disputes about reimbursement for medical expenses need to be settled between the parents privately.