

The Co-Parenting Quick Reference Guide

Your Chapter-by-Chapter Roadmap — from “This Wasn’t in the Brochure”

Chapter 1: Cartographers of Uncharted Waters

- **The New Waters:** You are a navigator in a parenting seascape that mainstream manuals don’t cover.
 - **The Neurodiversity Paradigm:** Differences in neurology are biodiversity, not just deficits.
 - **The Stress Reality:** Parenting ND kids involves chronic hypervigilance; stress markers run high.
 - **The Mission:** Success means becoming a cartographer of your child’s unique brain.
 - **Shared Leadership:** Alignment between co-parents is the primary “navigational aid.”
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Chapter 2: Understanding the Waters

- **The Ferrari Engine (ADHD):** Not a deficit of attention, but a dysregulation of it. High stimulation is the fuel.
 - **The Different OS (Autism):** Not broken, just running Linux in a Windows world. Sensory inputs can become deafening roars.
 - **The Autonomy Drive (PDA):** For some children, demands feel like life-threatening dangers. Control is their safety mechanism.
 - **The Protective Shield (ODD):** Defiance is a distress signal from a crew member who feels cornered below decks.
 - **The Tangled Map (Comorbidity):** These conditions rarely sail alone. Map the specific intersections.
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Chapter 3: Two Captains, One Ship

- **The Shared Helm:** You don’t need to be friends, but effective co-captaining changes everything.
 - **Neuroception of Danger:** Conflict between parents triggers the child’s survival brain.
 - **The Co-Regulation Key:** A dysregulated parent cannot calm a dysregulated child.
 - **Parenting Models:** From “Cooperative” to “Parallel” — choose what reduces conflict.
 - **The BIFF Method:** Keep communication Brief, Informative, Friendly, and Firm.
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Chapter 4: The Morning Passage

- **The Morning Tax:** Mornings demand what ND brains find most expensive — executive function and state regulation.

- **Neurotype Strategies:** ADHD needs dopamine bridges; ASD needs predictability; PDA needs low-demand language; ODD needs control options.
 - **The Launch Pad:** One zone near the front door where ALL exit items live. Out of sight = doesn't exist.
 - **Evening Sets Up Morning:** Prep the next day during calm. Protect sleep as biological necessity.
 - **Co-Parent Alignment:** Agree on medication timing, the Launch Pad concept, and "Big Three" rules.
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Chapter 5: Stormy Seas

- **The Difference:** A tantrum is a negotiation tactic; a meltdown is a biological power surge.
 - **The Four Winds:** Identify if the storm is Sensory (ASD), Dopamine (ADHD), Autonomy (PDA), or Relational (ODD).
 - **The Anchor:** You may not be able to calm the storm, but you can be the steady ground.
 - **The Protocol:** In a meltdown, logic is offline. Lead with safety, silence, and space.
 - **The Repair:** Recovery takes time. Connect first, correct later.
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Chapter 6: Bridging Two Worlds

- **The Switch Cost:** Transitions are neurologically expensive "context switches."
 - **The Buffer Zone:** Build a 30-minute zero-demand period after arrival.
 - **The Handoff:** Use school as a neutral buffer or keep direct exchanges brief and boring.
 - **The One Bag:** Duplicate essentials so the child only carries comfort objects.
 - **The "Business" Mindset:** Communicate like a professional partner, not an ex.
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Chapter 7: School and Beyond

- **The Ecosystem:** View school as part of your child's neurological environment.
 - **Information Asymmetry:** Ensure both parents have independent access to school portals.
 - **The Support Plan Capstone:** Present a unified, data-driven front in meetings.
 - **Accommodations as Scaffolding:** Frame supports as executive function "prosthetics," not crutches.
 - **Social Engineering:** Proactively brief coaches and playdate parents with "Coach's Cheat Sheets."
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Chapter 8: The Wider Village

- **The Village Imperative:** Isolation is the primary driver of burnout. A support circle is survival.
- **The Diplomatic Corps:** Use the "Operating System" analogy to explain your child's brain to family.

- **Guarding the Harbour:** Set firm boundaries with relatives who undermine your strategies.
 - **Neuro-Kin:** Seek other ND parents for validation and practical, judgement-free advice.
 - **The Public Square:** Navigate public meltdowns using “Shield, Script, Exit.”
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Chapter 9: The Caring Compass

- **The Oxygen Mask:** Self-care is a physiological requirement for co-regulation.
 - **Allostatic Load:** Chronic “high-alert” stress damages the body. Validate the exhaustion first.
 - **Empathy Fatigue:** You physiologically share your child’s distress. Numbness is safety, not failure.
 - **Micro-Habits:** Use vagus nerve resets (cold splash, physiological sigh) in under 60 seconds.
 - **The Partnership Anchor:** Protect your relationship with “No-Kid-Talk” zones.
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Chapter 10: New Horizons

- **The Shift:** Your role evolves from “Primary Navigator” to “Harbour Master.”
 - **The Second Birth:** Puberty is a neurological storm. Hormones accelerate existing challenges.
 - **The Driving Contract:** Driving is tied to executive function, not age.
 - **The Legal Cliff:** At 18, your legal rights vanish. Prepare early with supported decision-making.
 - **The Dignity of Risk:** Your adult child has the right to make mistakes.
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Chapter 11: The Voyage Continues

- **The Transformation:** You started as a confused tourist; you are ending as a seasoned cartographer.
 - **The Nonlinear Path:** Progress isn’t a straight line. It’s a spiral.
 - **The “Good Enough” Guide:** You don’t need to be perfect. Just stay on the course.
 - **The Community:** You are part of the neurodivergent co-parent archipelago. You are not alone.
 - **The Legacy:** Your greatest achievement isn’t “fixing” your child — it’s teaching them to navigate their own waters.
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This Wasn't in the Brochure: Co-Parenting ADHD, Autism, PDA & ODD By Adrian Wedd | thiswasntinthebrochure.wtf/book

11 chapters | 55 key insights | 4 neurotypes | 4 editions (US, AU, GB, NZ)